



*Viri seraphici Joannis Donne Qua-  
dragenary Effigies vera, Qui post  
eam aetatem Sacris initiatus Ec-  
clesiae S<sup>ti</sup> Pauli Decanus obiit.  
Ano { Dom 1651<sup>o</sup>  
      { Etatis suae 39<sup>o</sup>*

*Lombardus sculpit*



*Viri seraphici Joannis Donne Qua-  
dragenary Effigies vera, Qui post  
eam aetatem Sacris initiatus Ec-  
clesiae S<sup>ti</sup> Pauli Decanus obiit.  
Ano { Dom 1651<sup>o</sup>  
      { Etatis suae 39<sup>o</sup>*

*Lombardus sculpit*



# LETTERS

TO  
SEVERALL PERSONS  
OF HONOUR:

WRITTEN BY

JOHN DONNE

Sometime Deane of  
*St Pauls London.*

---

Published by JOHN DONNE Dr. of  
the Civill Law.

---

LONDON,  
Printed by J. Fleisher, and are to be sold by John  
*Sweeting*, at the Angel in Popeshhead-Alley.  
1654.

LETTERS

TO

OF HONOUR

AND

JOHN DOWNE

Sacred to the  
of the Church of England.

Published by John Downe, Esq.  
of the Civil Law.

LONDON  
Printed by T. Hodge, and are to be sold by J. M.  
at the Angel in Poplar-Street.  
1754.



To the most virtuous  
and excellent Lady M<sup>rs</sup>.

BRIDGET DUNCH.

MADAM,



**I** is an argument  
of the Immorta-  
lity of the Soul,  
that it can appre-  
hend, and embrace  
such a Concepti-  
on; and, it may be some kinde of  
Prophecy, of the continuance, and  
lasting

## The Epistle

lasting of these Letters, that having been scattered, more then Sibyls leaves, I cannot say into parts, but corners of the VVorld, they have re-collected and united themselves, meeting at once, as it were, at the same spring, from whence they flowed, but by Succession.

But, the piety of Æneas to Anchises, with the heat, and fervour of his zeale, had been dazelled, and extinguished by the fire of Troy, and his Father become his Tombe, had not a brighter flame appeared in his Protection, and Venus herself descended with her embraces, to protect her Martiall Champion; so that there is no safer way, to give a perpetuity to this remnant of the  
dead

---

## Dedicatory. T

---

dead Author; but, by dedicating it  
to the Altar of Beauty and perfection  
on; and if you, Madam, be but  
pleased to shed on it, one beam of  
your Grace and Favour, that very  
Adumbration will quicken it with a  
new Spirit, and defend it from all fire,  
(the fate of most Letters) but the  
last; which, turning these into ashes,  
shall revive the Author from his  
Urne, and put him into a capacity  
of celebrating you, his Guardian  
Angell, who has protected that part  
of his Soul, that he left behinde him,  
his Fame and Reputation.

The courtesies that you conferre  
upon the living, may admit of some  
allay, by a possibility of a Retalia-  
tion; but what you bestow upon the  
Dead

## The Epistle &c.

Dead, is a Sacrifice to pure Virtue;  
an ungifted Deity, & true, without  
Oblation, Altar, or Temple, if  
she were not enshrined in your noble  
breast; but, I must, forever, become  
her votary, if it be, but for giving  
me this Inclination, and desire of be-  
ing

Madam

Your most humble servant

To, Donna P



A  
**COLLECTION**  
 of Letters written to severall  
 Persons of Honour.

*To the worthiest Lady M<sup>rs</sup>. Bridget White.*

MADAME,

**T** Could make some guesse whether souls that go to heaven, retain any memory of us that stay behinde, if I knew whether you ever thought of us, since you enjoyed your heaven, which is your self, at home. Your going away hath made *London* a dead carkasse. A Tearn, and a Court do a little spice and embalm it, and keep it from putrefaction, but the soul went away in you: and I think the onely reason why the plague is somewhat slackened, is, because the place is dead already,

B

and



and no body left worth the killing. Where-  
 soever you are, there is *London* enough: and  
 it is a diminishing of you to say so, since  
 you are more then the rest of the world.  
 When you have a desire to work a miracle,  
 you will returne hither, and raise the place  
 from the dead, and the dead that are in it,  
 of which I am one, but that a hope that I  
 have a room in your favour keeps me alive;  
 which you shall abundantly confirme to  
 me, if by one letter you tell me, that you  
 have received my six, for now my letters  
 are grown to that bulk, that I may divide  
 them like *Amadis* the *Gaules* book, and tell  
 you, that this is the first letter of the second  
 part of the first book.

*Strand* S. Peters  
 day at nine.

Your humblest, and affectionate

servant *J. D.*

To



---

## Persons of Honour.

---

3

To the worthiest Lady M<sup>rs</sup>. B. W.

MADAME,

**I** Think the letters which I send to you single lose themselves by the way for want of a guide, or faint for want of company. Now, that on your part there be no excuse, after three single letters, I send three together, that every one of them may have two witnesses of their delivery. They come also to waite upon another letter from S<sup>r</sup> E. Herbert, of whose recovery from a Fever, you may apprehend a perfecter contentment then we, because you had none of the former sorrow. I am an Heretique if it be sound Doctrine, that pleasure lasts best after sorrow. For my part, I can love health well enough, though I be never sick; and I never needed my Mistris frowns and disfavours, to make her favours acceptable to me. In States, it is a weakness to stand upon a defensive war, and safer not to be invaded, then to have overcome: so in our soules health, an innocencie is better then the

heartiest repentance. And in the pleasures of this life, it is better that the variety of the pleasures give us the taste and appetite to it, then a sowe and sad interruption quicken our stomach; for then we live by Physick. I wish therefore all your happinesses such as this intire, and without flaw, or spot of discontentment; and such is the love and service of

*Strand S. Peters  
day at 4.*

*Your humblest and affectionatest  
servant J. D.*

*To the same.*

MADAME,

**T**His letter which I send enclosed hath been yours many moneths, and hath languished upon my table for a passage so long, that as others send news in their letters, I send an antiquity in mine. I durst not tear it, after it was yours: there is some sacriledge in defacing any thing consecrated to you, and some impiety to despaire that any thing devoted to you should not be reserved

served to a good issue. I remember I should have sent it by a servant, of whose diligence I see I was too confident. I know not what it says : but I dare make this letter no longer , because being very sure that I always think the same thoughts of you, I am afraid I should fall upon the same words, and so send one letter twice together.

*Novemb. 8.*

*Your very affectionate  
servant J. D.*

---

*To the Honourable Lady M<sup>rs</sup>. B. W.*

MADAME,

**I** Have but small comfort in this letter ; the messenger comes too easily to me, and I am too sure that the letter shall be delivered. All adventures towards you should be of more difficulty and hazard. But perchance I need not lament this; it may be so many of my letters are lost already that it is time that one should come, like *Jobs* servant, to bring word, that the rest were lost. If you have had more before, this comes to

aske how they were received; and if you have had none, it comes to try how they should have been received. It comes to you like a bashfull servant, who though he have an extreme desire to put himself in your presence, yet hath not much to say when he is come: yet hath it as much to say as you can think; because what degrees soever of honour, respect, and devotion, you can imagine or beleeve to be in any, this letter tells you, that all those are in me towards you. So that for this letter you are my Secretary; for your worthiness, and your opinion that I have a just estimation of them, write it: so that it is as long, and as good, as you think it; and nothing is left to me, but as a witness, to subscribe the name of

*Your most humble servant*

J. D.

Though this letter be yours, it will not misbecome or disproportion it that I mention your Noble brother, who is gone to *Cleave*, not to return till towards Christmas, except the business deserve him not so long.

To

*To the Honourable L. the Lady Kingsmel upon  
the death of her Husband.*

MADAME,

**T**Hose things which God dissolves at once, as he shall do the Sun, and Moon, and those bodies at the last conflagration, he never intends to reunite again; but in those things, which he takes in pieces, as he doth man, and wife, in these divorces, by death, and in single persons, by the divorce of body and soul, God hath another purpose to make them up again. That piece which he takes to himself, is presently cast in a mould, and in an instant made fit for his use; for heaven is not a place of a proficiency, but of present perfection. That piece which he leaves behind in this world, by the death of a part thereof, growes fitter and fitter for him, by the good use of his corrections, and the intire conformity to his will. Nothing disproportions us, nor makes us so uncapable of being reunited to those whom we loved here,

as murmuring, or not advancing the good-  
ness of him, who hath removed them from  
hence. We would wonder, to see a man,  
who in a wood were left to his liberty, to  
fell what trees he would, take onely the  
crooked, and leave the streightest trees; but  
that man hath perchance a ship to build,  
and not a house, and so hath use of that  
kinde of timber: let not us, who know  
that in Gods house there are many Mansi-  
ons, but yet have no modell, no designe of  
the forme of that building, wonder at his  
taking in of his materialls, why he takes  
the young, and leaves the old, or why the  
sickly overlive those, that had better health.  
We are not bound to think that souls de-  
parted, have devested all affections towards  
them, whom they left here; but we are  
bound to think, that for all their loves they  
would not be here again: Then is the will  
of God done in Earth, as it is in Heaven,  
when we neither pretermitt his actions, nor  
resist them; neither pass them over in an  
inconsideration, as though God had no  
hand

hand in them, nor go about to take them out of his hands, as though we could direct him to do them better. As Gods Scriptures are his will, so his actions are his will; both are Testaments, because they testifie his minde to us. It is not lawfull to adde a scedule to either of his wills: as they do ill, who adde to his written will, the Scriptures, a scedule of Apocryphall books: so do they also, who to his other will, his manifested actions, adde Apocryphall conditions, and a scedule of such limitations as these, If God would have stayed thus long, or, If God would have proceeded in this or this manner, I could have born it. To say that our afflictions are greater then we can bear, is so near to despairing, as that the same words express both; for when we consider *Caines* words in that originall tongue in which God spake, we cannot tell whether the words be, My punishment is greater then can be born; or, My sin is greater then can be forgiven. But Madame, you who willingly sacrificed your self to God,



in your obedience to him, in your own sickness, cannot be doubted to dispute with him, about any part of you, which he shall be pleased to require at your hands. The difference is great in the loss, of an arme, or a head; of a child, or a husband: but to them, who are incorporated into Christ, their head, there can be no beheading; upon you, who are a member of the spouse of Christ the Church, there can fall no widowhead, nor orphanage upon those children, to whom God is father. I have not another office by your husbands death; for I was your Chaplaine before, in my daily prayers; but I shall inlarge that office with other Collects, then before, that God will continue to you, that peace which you have ever had in him, and send you quiet, and peaceable dispositions in all them with whom you shall have any thing to do, in your temporall estate and matters of this world. *Amen.*

At my poor house at S.  
Pauls. 26. Octob.  
1624.

Your Ladiships very humble and  
thankfull servant in Christ  
Jesus J. Dome.



*To my honoured friend S<sup>r</sup> T. Lucey.*

*SIR,*

**I** Make account that this writing of letters, when it is with any seriousness, is a kind of extasie, and a departure and secession and suspension of the soul, w<sup>ch</sup> doth then communicate it self to two bodies: And as I would every day provide for my souls last convoy, though I know not when I shall die, and perchance I shall never die; so for these extasies in letters, I oftentimes deliver my self over in writing when I know not when those letters shall be sent to you, and many times they never are, for I have a little satisfaction in seeing a letter written to you upon my table, though I meet no opportunity of sending it. Especially this summer, when either by my early retiring home, or your irresolutions of your own purposes, or some other possessions of yours you did lesse reveale to me your progresses, and stations, and where I might crosse you by letters, then heretofore : I make shift

to lay little fault upon you, because my pardon might be easier, if I transgress into a longer and busier letter then your Countrey sports admit; but you may read it in winter: And by that time I may more clearly express my self for those things which have entred into me, concerning your soul: for as the greatest advantage which mans soul is thought to have beyond others, is that which they call *Actum reflexum*, and *iteratum*, (for Beasts do the same things as we do, but they do not consider nor remember the circumstances and inducements; and by what power, and faculty, it is that they do them) so of those which they call *Actum reflexum* the noblest is that which reflects upon the soul it self, and considers and meditates it, Into which consideration when I walke after my slow and unperfect pace, I begin to think that as litigious men tyred with suits, admit any arbitrement; and Princes travailed with long and wastfull war, descend to such conditions of peace, as they are soon after ashamed to have embraced:

so.

so Philosophers, and so all sects of Christians, after long disputations and controversies, have allowed many things for positive and dogmaticall truths which are not worthy of that dignity; And so many doctrines have grown to be the ordinary diet and food of our spirits, and have place in the pap of Catechismes, which were admitted but as Physick in that present distemper, or accepted in a lazie weariness; when men, so they might have something to relie upon, and to excuse themselves from more painfull inquisition, never examined what that was. To which indisposition of ours, the Casuists are so indulgent, as that they allow a conscience to adhere to any probable opinion against a more probable, and do never binde him to seek out which is the more probable, but give him leave to dissemble it and to depart from it, if by mischance he come to know it. This, as it appears in all sciences, so most manifestly in Physick; which for a long time considering nothing, but plain curing

and that but by example and precedent, the world at last longed for some certain Canons and Rules, how these cures might be accomplished; And when men are inflamed with this desire, and that such a fire breaks out that rages and consumes infinitely by heat of argument, except some of authority interpose. This produced *Hippocrates* his Aphorismes; and the world slumbred or took breath, in his resolution divers hundreds of years: And then in *Galen*'s time, which was not satisfied with the effect of curing, nor with the knowledge how to cure, broke out another desire of finding out the causes why those simples wrought those effects. Then *Galen* rather to stay their stomachs than that he gave them enough, taught them the qualities of the four Elements, and arrested them upon this, that all differences of qualities proceeded from them. And after, (not much before our time) men perceiving that all effects in Physick could not be derived from these beggerly and impotent properties,

ties of the Elements, and that therefore they were driven often to that miserable refuge of specifick form, and of antipathy and sympathy, we see the world hath turned upon new principles which are attributed to *Paracelsus*, but (indeed) too much to his honour. Certainly it is also so in the Physick of our soul Divinity, for in the Primitive Church, when amongst the Fathers there were so divers opinions of the state of the soul, presently after this life, they easily inclined to be content to do as much for them dead as when they were alive, and so concurred in a charitable disposition to pray for them; which manner of prayer then in use, no Christian Church at this day having received better light, will allow of. So also when in the beginning of *S. Augustines* time, Grace had been so much advanced that mans Nature was scarce admitted to be so much as any means or instrument (not onely no kinde of cause) of his own good works: And soon after in *S. Augustines* time also mans free will (by fierce opposi-

opposition and arguing against the former error) was too much overvalued, and admitted into too near degrees of fellowship with Grace; those times admitted a doctrine and form of reconciliation, which though for reverence to the time, both the Dominicans and Jesuits at this day in their great quarrell about Grace and Free will would yet seem to maintaine, yet indifferent and dispassioned men of that Church see there is no possibility in it, and therefore accuse it of absurdity and almost of heresie. I think it falls out thus also in the matter of the soul: for Christian Religion presuming a soul, and intending principally her happiness in the life to come, hath been content to accept any way which hath been obtruded; how this soul is begun in us. Hence it is that whole Christian Churches are themselves upon propagation from parents; and other whole Christian Churches allow onely infusion from God. In both which opinions there appear such infirmities as it is time to look for a better: for  
who-

whosoever will adhere to the way of propagation, can never evict necessarily and certainly a naturall immortality in the soul, if the soul result out of matter, nor shall he ever prove that all mankind hath any more then one soul: as certainly of all beasts, if they receive such souls as they have from their parents, every species can have but one soul. And they which follow the opinion of infusion from God, and of a new creation (which is now the more common opinion) as they can very hardly defend the doctrine of original sin (the soul is forced to take this infection, and comes not into the body of her own disposition) so shall they never be able to prove that all those whom we see in the shape of men have an immortall and reasonable soul, because our parents are as able as any other species is to give us a soul of growth and of sense, and to perform all vitall and animall functions. And so without infusion of such a soul may produce a creature as wise and well disposed as any horse or Elephant, of which degree many

simpson

D

whom



whom we see come far short; nor hath God bound or declared himself that he will always create a soul for every embryo, there is yet therefore no opinion in Philosophy, nor Divinity, so well established as constrains us to beleieve, both that the soul is immortall, and that every particular man hath such a soul: which since out of the great mercy of our God we do constantly beleieve, I am ashamed that we do not also know it by searching farther: But as sometimes we had rather beleieve a Travellers lie then go to disprove him; so men rather cleave to these ways then seek new: yet because I have meditated therein, I will shortly acquaint you with what I think, for I would not be in danger of that law of *Moses*, That if a man dig a pit, and cover it not, he must recompense those which are damnified by it: which is often interpreted of such as shake old opinions, and do not establish new as certain, but leave consciences in a worse danger then they found them in. I beleieve that law of *Moses* hath in it some mysterie



mysterie and appliablenesse; for by that law men are onely then bound to that indemnity and compensation, if an Oxe or an Asse (that is, such as are of a strong constitution and accustomed to labour) fall therein; but it is not said so, if a Sheep or a Goat fall: no more are we, if men in a sillinesse or wantonnesse will stumble or take a scandall, bound to rectifie them at all times. And therefore because I justly presume you strong and watchfull enough, I make account that I am not obnoxious to that law, since my meditations are neither too wide nor too deep for you, except onely that my way of expressing them may be extended beyond your patience and pardon, which I will therefore tempt no longer at this time.

From Micham, my  
close prison ever  
since I saw you,  
9 Othob.

Your very affectionate friend  
and servant and lover

I. Donne.

D 2

To

*To the Noblest Knight Sr. Edward Herbert L. of  
Cherbury; sent to him with his  
Book Biathanatos.*

SIR,

**I** Make accompt that this book hath enough performed that which it undertook, both by argument and example. It shall therefore the lesse need to be it self another example of the Doctrine. It shall not therefore kill it self; that is, not bury it self; for if it should do so, these reasons, by which that act should be defended or excused, were also lost with it. Since it is content to live, it cannot chuse a wholsomeraire then your Library, where Authors of all complexions are presented. If any of them grudge this book a room, and suspect it of new or dangerous doctrine, you who know us all, can best moderate. To those reasons which I know your love to me will make in my favour and discharge, you may adde this, that though this doctrine hath not been taught nor defended by writers, yet.

yet they, most of any sort of men in the world, have practised it.

*Your very true and earnest friend  
and servant and lover*

*J. Donne.*

*To S<sup>r</sup> Robert Carre now Earle of Ankerum, with my  
Book Biathanatos at my going into Germany.*

*SIR,*

**I** Had need do somewhat towards you above my promises; How weak are my performances, when even my promises are defective? I cannot promise, no not in mine own hopes, equally to your merit towards me. But besides the Poems, of which you took a promise, I send you another Book to which there belongs this History. It was written by me many years since; and because it is upon a misinterpretable subject, I have always gone so near suppressing it, as that it is onely not burnt: no hand hath passed upon it to copy it, nor many eyes to read it: onely to some particular friends in both Universities, then when I writ it, I did communicate it: And

I remember, I had this answer, That certainly, there was a false thread in it, but not easily found: Keep it, I pray, with the same jealousie; let any that your discretion admits to the sight of it, know the date of it; and that it is a Book written by *Jack Donne*, and not by *D. Donne*: Reserve it for me, if I live, and if I die, I only forbid it the Presse, and the Fire: publish it not, but yet burn it not; and between those, do what you will with it. Love me still, thus farre, for your own sake, that when you withdraw your love from me, you will finde so many unworthinesses in me, as you grow ashamed of having had so long, and so much, such a thing as

*Your poor servant in Chr. Jesu.*  
J. Donne.

*To the Countesse of Bedford.*

MADAM,

**A**mongst many other dignities which this letter hath by being received and seen by you, it is not the least, that it was  
pro-

promised of before it was born : for your brother told you in his letter, that I had written : he did me much honour both in advancing my truth so farre as to call a promise an act already done ; and to provide me a means of doing him a service in this act, which is but doing right to my self : for by this performance of mine own word, I have also justified that part of his Letter which concerned me, and it had been a double guiltinesse in me, to have made him guilty towards you. It makes no difference that this came not the same day, nor bears the same date as his ; for though in inheritances and worldly possessions we consider the dates of Evidences, yet in Letters, by which we deliver over our affections, and assurances of friendship, and the best faculties of our souls, times and daies cannot have interest, nor be considerable, because that which passes by them, is eternall, and out of the measure of time. Because therefore it is the office of this Letter, to convey my best wishes, and all the effects  
of

of a noble love unto you, (which are the best fruits that so poor a soil, as my poor soul is, can produce) you may be pleased to allow the Letter thus much of the soules privilege, as to exempt it from straitnesse of hours, or any measure of times, and so beleeeve it came then. And for my part, I shall make it so like my soul, that as that affection, of which it is the messenger, begun in me without my knowing when, any more then I know when my soul began; so it shall continue as long as that.

*Your most affectionate friend and servant*  
J. D.

*To the right honourable the Countess of Montgomery.*

MADAM,

**O**F my ability to doe your Ladiship service, any thing may be an embleme good enough; for as a word vanisheth, so doth any power in me to serve you; things that are written are fitter testimonies, because they remain and are permanent :

manent: in writing this Sermon which your Ladiship was pleased to hear before, I confesse I satisfie an ambition of mine own, but it is the ambition of obeying your commandment, not onely an ambition of leaving my name in the memory, or in the Cabinet: and yet, since I am going out of the Kingdom, and perchance out of the world, (when God shall have given my soule a place in heaven) it shall the lesse diminish your Ladiship, if my poor name be found about you. I know what dead carcasses things written are, in respect of things spoken. But in things of this kinde, that soul that inanimates them, receives debts from them: The Spirit of God that dictates them in the speaker or writer, and is present in his tongue or hand, meets himself again (as we meet our selves in a glasse) in the eies and hearts of the hearers and readers: and that Spirit, which is ever the same to an equall devotion, makes a writing and a speaking equall means to edification. In one circumstance, my preaching

E

and



and my writing this Sermon is too equall :  
 that that your Ladiship heard in a hoarse  
 voyce then, you read in a course hand now:  
 but in thankfulnesse I shall lift up my hands  
 as clean as my infirmities can keep them,  
 and a voyce as clear as his spirit shall  
 be pleased to tune in my prayers in all places  
 of the world, which shall either sustain or  
 bury

*Your Ladiships humble servant  
 in Christ Iesus*

J. D.

---

*To Sir H. R.*

**I**F a whole year be but *Annus ab Annulo*,  
 because it returnes into it self, what *Annus-  
 latus* shall be diminutive enough, to expresse  
 our weekly revolutions? In chaines the least  
 linkes have most curiosity, but that can be  
 no emblem of us: but they have also the  
 most strength, and that may. The first sphere  
 onely which is resisted by nothing, absolves  
 his course every day; and so doth true  
 friendship well placed, often iterate in act

OF



or purpose, the same offices. But as the lower spheres, subject to the violence of that, and yet naturally encouraged to a reluctance against it, have therefore many distractions, and eccentricities, and some trepidations, and so return but lamely, and lately to the same place, and office: so that friendship which is not moved primarily by the proper intelligence, discretion, and about the naturall center, vertue, doth perchance sometimes, some things, somewhat like true friendship; but hath many deviations, which are strayings into new loves, (not of other men; for that is proper to true wise friendship, which is not a mar-ring; but of other things) and hath such trepidations as keep it from shewing it self, where great persons do not love; and it returns to the true first station and place of friendship planetarily, which is uncertainly and seldome. I have ever seen in *London* and our Court, as some colours, and habits, and continuances, and motions, and phrases, and accents, and songs, so friends in  
E 2 fashion

fashion and in season : and I have seen them as sodainly abandoned altogether, though I see no change in them, nor know more why they were left, then why they were chosen. To do things by example, and upon confidence of anothers judgment may be some kinde of a second wisdome; but it is but writing by a copy : or indeed it is the hardest of all, and the issue of the first wisdome, for I cannot know that this example should be followed, except I knew that it is good, and so I judge my Judge. Our assent therefore, and arrest, must be upon things, not persons. And when we are sure we are in the right way, for great persons, we may be glad of their company, if they go our way ; we may for them change our place, but not our end, nor our way, if there be but one, us in Religion. In persevering in it, it concerns as much what our companions be, but very much what our friends. In which I know I speak not dangerously nor mis-applably to you, as though I averted you from any of those friends.

friends, who are of other impressions then you or I in some great circumstances of Religion. You know I never fettered nor imprisoned the word Religion; not straightning it Frierly, *ad Religiones factitias*, (as the Romans call well their orders of Religion) nor immuring it in a Rome, or a Wittemberg, or a Geneva; they are all virtuall beams of one Sun, and wheresoever they finde clay hearts, they harden them, and moulder them into dust; and they entender and mollifie waxen. They are not so contrary as the North and South Poles; and that they are connaturall pieces of one circle. Religion is Christianity, which being too spirituall to be seen by us, doth therefore take an apparent body of good life and works, so salvation requires an honest Christian. These are the two Elements, and he which elemented from these, hath the complexion of a good man, and a fit friend. The diseases are, too much intention into indiscreet zeal, and too much remissesse and negligence by giving scandall: for

our condition and state in this, is as infirm as in our bodies; where physicians consider only two degrees; sicknesse, and neutrality; for there is no health in us. This, Sir, I use to say to you, rather to have so good a witnesse and corrector of my meditations, then to advise; and yet to do that too, since it is pardonable in a friend: Not to slack you towards those friends which are religious in other clothes then we; (for *Amici vitia si feras facis tua*, is true of such fautes) but to keep you awake against such as the place where you must live will often obtrude, which are not onely naked, without any fashion of such garments, but have neither the body of Religion, which is morall honesty, and sociable faithfulness, nor the soul, Christianity. I know not how this paper scaped last week which I send now, I was so sure that I enwrapped it then, that I should be so still, but that I had but one copy; forgive it as you use to do. From Micham in as much haste, and with as ill Pen and Inke, as the letter can accuse me of;

of; but with the last and the next weeks heart and affection.

*Tours very truly and affectionately*  
J. Donne.

---

*To Sir H. G.*

*S I R,*

**T**His letter hath more merit, then one of more diligence, for I wrote it in my bed, and with much pain. I have occasion to sit late some nights in my study, (which your books make a pretty library) and now I finde that that room hath a wholesome emblematicque use: for having under it a vault, I make that promise me, that I shall die reading, since my book and a grave are so near. But it hath another unwholesomenesse, that by raw vapors rising from thence, (for I can impute it to nothing else) I have contracted a sicknesse which I cannot name nor describe. For it hath so much of a continuall Cramp, that it wrests the sinews, so much of a Tetane, that it withdraws and puls the mouth, and  
so

so much of the Gout, (which they whose counsell I use, say it is) that it is not like to be cured, though I am too hasty in three days to pronounce it. If it be the Gout, I am miserable, for that affects dangerous parts, as my neck and brest, and (I think fearfully) my stomach, but it will not kill me yet; I shall be in this world, like a porter in a great house, ever nearest the doore, but seldomest abroad: I shall have many things to make me weary, and yet not get leave to be gone. If I go, I will provide by my best means that you suffer not for me, in your bonds. The estate which I should leave behinde me of any estimation, is my poor fame, in the memory of my friends, and therefore I would be curious of it, and provide that they repent not to have loved me. Since my imprisonment in my bed, I have made a meditation in verse, which I call a Litany; the word you know imports no other then supplication, but all Churches have one forme of supplication, by that name. Amongst ancient annals I mean  
some

Some 800 years, I have met two Letanies in Latin verse, which gave me not the reason of my meditations, for in good faith I thought not upon them then, but they give me a defence, if any man; to a Lay man, and a private, impute it as a fault, to take such divine and publique names, to his own little thoughts. The first of these was made by *Ratpertus* a Monk of *Suevia*; and the other by *S. Notker*, of whom I will give you this note by the way, that he is a private Saint, for a few Parishes; they were both but Monks, and the Letanies poor and barbarous enough; yet Pope *Nicolas* the 5, valued their devotion so much, that he canonized both their Poems, and commanded them for publike service in their Churches: mine is for lesser Chappels, which are my friends, and though a copy of it were due to you, now, yet I am so unable to serve my self with writing it for you at this time, (being some 30 staves of 9 lines) that I must intreat you to take a promise that you shall have the first, for a testimony of that duty

F

which



which I owe to your love, and to my self, who am bound to cherish it by my best offices. That by which it will deserve best acceptation, is, That neither the Roman Church need call it defective, because it abhors not the particular mention of the blessed Triumphers in heaven; nor the Reformed can discreetly accuse it, of attributing more then a rectified devotion ought to doe. The day before I lay down, I was at *London*, where I delivered your Letter for *S<sup>r</sup> Ed. Conway*, and received another for you, with the copy of my Book, of which it is impossible for me to give you a copy so soon, for it is not of much lesse then 300 pages. If I die, it shall come to you in that fashion that your Letter desires it. If I warm again, (as I have often seen such beggers as my indisposition is, end themselves soon, and the patient as soon) you and I shal speak together of that, before it be too late to serve you in that commandment. At this time I onely assure you, that I have not appointed it upon any person,  
nor



nor ever purposed to print it : which later perchance you thought, and grounded your request thereupon. A Gent. that visited me yesterday told me that our Church hath lost M<sup>r</sup> *Hugh Broughton*, who is gone to the Roman side. I have known before, that *Scrarius* the Jesuit was an instrument from Cardinall *Baronius* to draw him to *Rome*, to accept a stipend, onely to serve the Christian Churches in controversies with the Jews, without indangering himself to change of his perswasion in particular deductions between these Christian Churches, or being enquired of, or tempted thereunto. And I hope he is no otherwise departed from us. If he be, we shall not escape scandall in it; because, though he be a man of many distempers, yet when he shall come to eat assured bread, and to be removed from partialities, to which want drove him, to make himself a reputation, and raise up favourers; you shall see in that course of opposing the Jews, he will produce worthy things: and our Church will

perchance blush to have lost a Souldier fit for that great battell; and to cherish onely those single Duellisms, between *Rome* and *England*, or that more single, and almost self-homicide, between the unconformed Ministers, and Bishops. I writ to you last week that the plague increased; by which you may see that my Letters—

—opinion of the song, not that I make such trifles for praise, but because as long as you speak comparatively of it with mine own, and not absolutely, so long I am of your opinion even at this time; when I humbly thank God, I ask & have his comfort of sadder meditations; I doe not condemn in my self, that I have given my wit such evaporations, as those, if they be free from prophaneness, or obscene provocations. S<sup>r</sup> you would pity me if you saw me write, and therefore will pardon me if I write no more: my pain hath drawn my head so much awry, and holds it so, that mine eye cannot follow mine hand: I receive you therefore into my prayers,  
with

with mine own weary soul, and commend my self to yours. I doubt not but next week I shall be good news to you, for I have mending or dying on my side, which is two to one. If I continue thus, I shall have comfort in this, that my B. Saviour exercising his Justice upon my two worldly parts, my fortune, and body, reserves all his mercy for that which best lasts it, and most needs it, my soul. I profess to you truly, that my lothnesse to give over now, seems to my self an ill sign, that I shall write no more.

Your poor friend, and Gods poor patient,  
Jo. Donne.

---

To my worthy and honoured friend M<sup>r</sup> George  
Garet.

SIR,

I Am sorry, if your care of me have made you importune to any body else; yet I cannot be very sorry because it gives new testimonies of your favour to me, of which I shall ever be very glad, and (that which

is my onely vertue) thankfull: for desperate fortunes as mine, may well make friends loth to doe curtesies, because an inability in deserving or requiting, takes from them the honour of having done a curtesie, and leaves it but the poor name of an alms; and alms may be given in easier proportions, and more meritoriously. But Sir, by what name or weight soever you esteem this kindnesse which you have done me, I value it so, as might alone perswade me of your care of me; in recompense of which, you must be pleased to accept new assurances that I am

I pray let my service be  
presented by you to  
M<sup>r</sup> Roope.

Your very affectionate servant,  
J. Donne.

To M<sup>r</sup> George Garet.

I have not received that Letter, which by this, I perceive you sent to London; if there were any thing in that, by which I might have taken occasion to have done you service

vice before this time, I have a double reason of grief for the want of it. I came from thence upon *Thursday*, where I left *Sir Tho. Roe* so indulgent to his sorrow, as it had been an injury to have interrupted it with my unusefull company. I have done, nothing of that kinde as your Letter intimates, in the memory of that good Gentlewoman; if I had, I should not finde any better use of it, then to put it into your hands. You teach me what I owe her memory; and if I pay that debt so, you have a part and interest in it, by doing me the honour of remembring it: and therefore it must come quickly to you. I hope not for your return from Court, till I come thither; which if I can be master of my self, or servant to my self, which I think is all one, I hope to do some ten daies hence, making it my way to the *Bathe*. If you find any there that have not forgot my name, continue me in their favour, and hold in your self a firm assurance that I am

Your affectionate servant J. Donne.

To

*To M<sup>rs</sup> Martha Garet.*

MADAME,

**T**Hough there be much merit, in the favour your brother hath done me, in a visit, yet that which doth enrich and perfect it, is, that he brought you with him; which he doth, as well by letting me see how you do, as by giving me occasions, and leave to talk with you by this Letter: if you have any servant, which wishes you better then I, it must be because he is able to put his wishes into a better frame, and expresse them better, and understand proportion, and greatnesse better then I. I am willing to confesse my impotencie; which is, that I know no wish good enough for you; if any doe, my advantage is, that I can exceed his, by adding mine to it. You must not think that I begin to think thus, when you begin to hear it, by a Letter; As sometimes by the changing of the winde, you begin to hear a Trumpet, which sounded long before you heard it; so are these thoughts  
of

of you familiar and ordinary in me, though they have seldome the help of this conveyance to your knowledge: I am loth to leave; for as long as in any fashion, I can have your brother and you here, you make my house a kinde of Dorvey; but since I cannot stay you here, I will come thither to you; which I do, by wrapping up in this paper, the heart of

*Your most affectionate servant*  
J. Donne.

---

*To Sir Thomas Roe.*

*SIR,*

**I**T is an ease to your friends abroad, that you are more a man of businesse then heretofore; for now it were an injury to trouble you with a busie Letter. But by the same reason I were inexcusable if I should not write at all, since the lesse, the more acceptable; therefore, Sir, though I have no more to say, but to renew the obligations I have towards you, and to continue my

G

place



place in your love, I would not forbear to tell you so. If I shall also tell you, that when this place affords any thing worth your hearing, I will be your relator, I think I take so long a day, as you would forget the debt, it appears yet to be so barren. Howsoever with every commodity, I shall say something, though it be but a descant upon this plain song, that I am

*Your affectionate servant*  
J. Donne.

---

*To all my friends : Sir H. Goodere.*

S I R,

I Am not weary of writing ; it is the course but durable garment of my love; but I am weary of wanting you. I have a minde like those bodies, which have hot Livers, and cold stomachs ; or such a distemper as travelled me at Paris ; a Fever, and dysentery: in which, that which is physick to one infirmity, nourishes the other. So I abhor nothing more then sadness, except the ordinary remedy, change of company.

pany. I can allow my self to be *Animal sociale*, applicable to my company, but not *gregale*, to herd my self in every troupe. It is not perfectly true which a very subtil, yet very deep wit *Averroes* says, that all mankinde hath but one soul, which informes and rules us all, as one Intelligence doth the firmament and all the Starres in it; as though a particular body were too little an organ for a soul to play upon. And it is as imperfect which is taught by that religion w<sup>ch</sup> is most accommodate to sense (I dare not say to reason (though it have appearance of that too) because none may doubt but that that religion is certainly best, which is reasonablest) That all mankinde hath one protecting Angel; all Christians one other, all English one other, all of one Corporation and every civill coagulation or society one other; and every man one other. Though both these opinions expresse a truth; which is, that mankinde hath very strong bounds to cohabit and concurre in other then mountains and hills during his life. First, com-

mon, and mutuall necessity of one another; and therefore naturally in our defence, and subventions we first flie to our selves; next, to that which is likest, other men. Then, naturall and inborn charity, beginning at home, which perswades us to give, that we may receive: And legall charity, which makes us also forgive. Then an ingrafting in one another, and growing together by a custome of society: and last of all, strict friendship, in which band men were so presumed to be coupled, that our Confessor King had a law, that if a man be killed, the murderer shall pay a sum *felago suo*, which the interpreters call, *fide ligato, et comite vite*. All these bands I willingly receive, for no man is lesse of himself then I: nor any man enough of himself. To be so, is all one with omnipotence. And it is well marked, that in the holy Book, wheresoever they have rendered Almighty, the word is Self-sufficient. I think sometimes that the having a family should remove me farre from the curse of *Va soli*.

But

But in so strict obligation of Parent, or Husband, or Master, (and perchance it is so in the last degree of friendship) where all are made one, I am not the lesse alone, for being in the midst of them. Therefore this *oleum letitiae*, this balme of our lives, this alacrity which dignifies even our service to God, this gallant enemy of dejection and sadnesse, (for which and wickednesse the Italian allows but one word, *Triste*: And in full condemnation whereof it was prophesied of our blessed Saviour, *Non erit tristis*, in his conversation) must be sought and preserved diligently. And since it grows without us, we must be sure to gather it from the right tree. They which place this alacrity only in a good conscience, deal somewhat too roundly with us, for when we aske the way, they shew us the town afar off: Will a Physician consulted for health and strength, bid you have good sinews and equall temper? It is true, that this conscience is the resultance of all other particular actions; it is our triumph and

banquet in the haven; but I would come towards that also, (as Mariners say) with a merry winde. Our nature is Mete-orique, we respect (because we partake so) both earth and heaven; for as our bodies glorified shall be capable of spirituall joy, so our souls demerged into those bodies, are allowed to partake earthly pleasure. Our soul is not sent hither, only to go back again: we have some errand to do here: nor is it sent into prison, because it comes innocent: and he which sent it, is just. As we may not kill our selves, so we may not bury our selves: which is done or endangered in a dull Monastique sadnesse, which is so much worse then jolity (for upon that word I durst

— And certainly despair is infinitely worse, then presumption: both because this is an excesse of love, that of fear; and because this is up, that down the hill; eaiser, and more stumbling. Heaven is expressed by singing, hell by weeping. And though our blessed Saviour be never noted

to have laughed, yet his continuance is said ever to be smiling. And that even moderate mirth of heart, and face, and all I wish to my self; and perswade you to keep. This alacrity is not had by a general charity and equanimity to all mankind, for that is to seek fruit in a wilderness: nor from a singular friend, for that is to fetch it out of your own pocket: but the various and abundant grace of it, is good company. In which no rank, no number, no quality, but ill, and such a degree of that as may corrupt and poyson the good, is exempt. For in nearer then them, your friend, and somewhat nearer then he, in your self you must allow some inordinatenesse of affections and passions. For it is not true that they are not natural, but storms and tempests of our blood and humours: for they are naturall, but sickly. And as the Indian priests expressed an excellent charity, by building Hospitalls and providing chirurgery for birds and beasts lamed by mischance, or age, or labour: so must we, not cut off,  
but

but cure these affections, which are the bestiall part.

To Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

**E**Very tuesday I make account that I turn a great hour-glass, and consider that a weeks life is run out since I writ. But if I aske my self what I have done in the last watch, or would do in the next, I can say nothing; if I say that I have passed it without hurting any, so may the Spider in my window. The primitive Monkes were excusable in their retirings and enclosures of themselves: for even of them every one cultivated his own garden and orchard, that is, his soul and body, by meditation, and manufactures; and they ought the world no more since they consumed none of her sweetnesse, nor begot others to burden her. But for me, if I were able to husband all my time so thriftily, as not onely not to wound my soul in any minute by actuall sinne, but not to rob and cōsumen her  
by



by giving any part to pleasure or businesse, but bestow it all upon her in meditation, yet even in that I should wound her more, and contract another guiltinesse: As the Eagle were very unnaturall if because she is able to do it, she should pearch a whole day upon a tree, staring in contemplation of the majestic and glory of the Sun, and let her young Eglers starve in the nest. Two of the most precious things which God hath afforded us here, for the agony and exercise of our sense and spirit, which are a thirst and inhiation after the next life, and a frequency of prayer and meditation in this, are often envenomed, and putrefied, and stray into a corrupt disease: for as God doth thus occasion, and positively concurre to evill, that when a man is purposed to do a great sin, God infuses some good thoughts which make him choose a lesse sin, or leave out some circumstance which aggravated that; so the devill doth not only suffer but provoke us to some things naturally good, upon condition that we shall omit

H

some

some other more necessary and more obligatory. And this is his greatest subtilty; because herein we have the deceitfull comfort of having done well, and can very hardly spie our error because it is but an insensible omission, and no accusing act. With the first of these I have often suspected my self to be overtaken; which is, with a desire of the next life: which though I know it is not meerly out of a wearinesse of this, because I had the same desires when I went with the tyde, and enjoyed fairer hopes then now: yet I doubt worldly encombrances have encreased it. I would not that death should take me asleep. I would not have him meerly seise me, and onely declare me to be dead; but win me, and overcome me. When I must shipwrack, I would do it in a Sea, where mine impatience might have some excuse; not in a fullen weedy lake, where I could not have so much as exercise for my swimming. Therefore I would fain do something; but that I cannot tell what, is no wonder.

For to chuse, is to do : but to be no part of any body, is to be nothing. At most, the greatest persons, are but great wens, and excrescences; men of wit and delightfull conversation, but as moales for ornament, except they be so incorporated into the body of the world, that they contribute something to the sustentation of the whole. This I made account that I begun early, when I understood the study of our laws : but was diverted by the worst voluptuousness, which is an Hydroptique immoderate desire of humane learning and languages: beautifull ornaments to great fortunes; but mine needed an occupation, and a course which I thought I entred well into, when I submitted my self to such a service, as I thought might imployed those poor advantages, which I had. And there I stumbled too, yet I would try again: for to this hour I am nothing, or so little, that I am scarce subject and argument good enough for one of mine own letters: yet I fear, that doth not ever proceed from a good root, that I

am so well content to be lesse, that is dead. You, Sir, are farre enough from these descents, your vertue keeps you secure, and your naturall disposition to mirth will preserve you; but lose none of these holds, a slip is often as dangerous as a bruise, and though you cannot fall to my lownesse, yet in a much lesse distraction you may meet my sadnesse; for he is no safer which falls from an high tower into the leads, then he which falls from thence to the ground: make therefore to your self some mark, and go towards it alegrement. Though I be in such a planetary and erratique fortune, that I can do nothing constantly, yet you may finde some constancy in my constant advising you to it.

*Your hearty true friend*  
J. Donne.

*I came this evening from M. Jones his house in Essex, where M. Martin hath been, and left a relation of Captain Whitcocks death, perchance it is no news to you, but it was to me, without doubt want broke*

broke him; for when M. Hollands company by reason of the plague broke, the Captain sought to be at M<sup>rs</sup>. Jones house, who in her husbands absence declining it, he went in the night, his boy carrying his cloakbag, on foot to the Lord of Suffex, who going next day to hunt, the Captain not then sick, told him he would see him no more. A Chaplain came up to him, to whom he delivered an account of his understanding, and I hope, of his beliefe, and soon after dyed; and my Lord hath buryed him with his own Ancestors. Perchance his life needed a longer sicknesse, but a man may go faster and safer, when he enjoyes that day light of a clear and sound understanding, then in the night or twilight of an ague or other disease. And the grace of Almighty God doth every thing suddenly and hastily, but depart from us, it inlightens us, warms us, heats us, ravishes us, at once. Such a medicin, I fear, his inconsideration needed; and I hope as confidently that he had it. As our soul is infused when it is created, and created when it is infused, so at her going out, Gods mercy is had by asking, and that is asked by having. Left your Polesworth carrier should couse me, I send my man with this letter early to London, whither this Tuesday all the Court come to a Christening at

Arondell house, and stay in town so that I will sup  
with the good Lady, and write again to morrow to you, if  
any thing be occasioned there, which concerns you, and  
I will tell her so; next day they are to return to Ham-  
pton, and upon friday the King to Royston.

*To Sir H. Goodere.*

S I R,

**I**F this which I send you inclosed give me  
right intelligence, I present you a way by  
which you may redeem all your former  
wastes, and recompense your ill fortunes,  
in having sometimes apprehended unsuc-  
cessfull suits, and (that which I presume you  
affect most) ease your self from all future  
inquisition of widowes or such busineses  
as aske so over industrious a pursuit, as de-  
vest a man from his best happinesse of en-  
joying himself. I give you (I think) the first  
knowledge, of two millions confiscated to  
the Crown of England: of which I dare  
assure my self the coffers have yet touched  
none, nor have the Commissioners for suits  
any

any thing to oppose against a suit founded upon this confiscation, though they hold never so strictly to their instructions. After you have served your self with a proportion, I pray make a petition in my name for as much as you think may begiven me for my book out of this; for, but our of this, I have no imagination. And for a token of my desire to serve him, present M. Fowler with 3 or 4000 li. of this since he was so resolved never to leave his place, without a suit of that value. I wish your consent in the town, better provided; but if he be not, here is enough for him. And since I am ever an affectionate servant to that journey, acquaint M. Martin from me, how easie it will be to get a good part of this for Virginia. Upon the least petition that M. Brook can present he may make himself whole again, of all which the Kings servants M. Lepion and master Waterouse, have endammaged him. Give him leave to offer to M. Hakevill enough to please himself, for his *Aurum Regium*. And if M. Gherard have  
no



no present hopefull designe upon a worthy Widow, let him have so much of this as will provide him that house and coach which he promised to lend me at my return. If M. *Inago Jones* be not satisfied for his last Maske ( because I hear say it cannot come to much ) here is enough to be had: This is but a copy, but if Sir *Ro. Cotton* have the originall he will not deny it you; if he hath it not, no body else hath it, nor can prevent you; husband it well, which you may easily doe, because I assure my self none of the children nor friends of the party condemned will crosse you or importune the King for any part. If I get no more by it, yet it hath made me a Letter. And Sir ( to depart from this Mine ) in what part of my Letters soever you find the remembrance of my humble service to my Lord of *Bedford*, I beseech you ever think them intended for the first, and in that ranke present them. I have yet received but one Letter from you which was of the 10 of *December* by M. *Pory*, but you see that

as long as there is one egge left in the nest, I never leave laying, nor should although you had sent none since; all at last will not amount to so good a testimony as I would fain give how much I am,

*Your affectionate servant and lover,*  
J. Donne.

Sir, I write this Letter in no very great degree of convalescence from such storms of a stomach colick as kept me in a continuall vomiting, so that I know not what I should have been able to doe to dispatch this winde, but that an honest fever came and was my physick: I tell you of it onely lest some report should make it worse, for we thinks that they who love to adde to news should think it a master-piece to be able to say no worse of any ill fortune of mine then it deserves, since commonly it deserves worse then they can say, but they did not, and I am reprieved. I finde dying to be like those facts which denying makes felony: when a sickness examines us, and we confess that we are willing to die, we cannot, but those who are-----incurre the penalty: and I may die yet, if talking idly be an ill sign. God be with you.

I

To

To the same,

SIR,

**I**T is in our State ever held for a good sign. To change Prison, and *nella Signoria de mi*, I will think it so, that my sicknesse hath given me leave to come to my London-prison. I made no doubt but my entrance-pain (for it was so rather then a sicknesse, but that my sadnesse putrefied and corrupted it to that name) affected you also; for nearer Contracts then generall Christianity, had made us so much towards one, that one part cannot escape the distemper of the other. I was therefore very carefull, as well to slack any sorrow which my danger might occasion in you; as to give you the comfort of having been heard in your prayers for me, to tell you as soon as my pain remitted what steps I made towards health, which I did last week. This Tuesday morning your man brought me a Letter, which (if he had not found me at London) I see he had a hasty commandment to have

have brought to *Micham*. S<sup>r</sup>, though my fortune hath made me such as I am, rather a sicknesse and disease of the world then any part of it, yet I esteemed my self so far from being so to you, as I esteemed you to be far from being so of the world, as to measure men by fortune or events. I am now gone so far towards health, as there is not infirmity enough left in me for an assurance of so much noblenesse and truth, as your last Letter is to work upon, that might cure a greater indisposition then I am now in: And though if I had died, I had not gone without testimonies of such a disposition in you towards the reparation of my fortune, or preservation of my poor reputation; yet I would live, and be some such thing as you might not be ashamed to love. Your man must send away this hour in which he visits me; and I have not yet (for I came last night) offered to visit my *La. Bedford*, and therefore have nothing to say which should make me grudge this straitnesse of time. He tels me he sends again

upon *Thursday*, and therefore I will make an end of this Letter, and perfect it then. I doubt my Letters have not come duly to your hand, and that I writing in my dungeon of *Michim* without dating, have made the Chronologic and sequence of my Letters perplexed to you; howsoever you shall not be rid of this Ague of my Letters, though perchance the fit change daies. I have received in a narrow compasse three of yours, one with the Catalogue of your Books, another I found here left last *Saturday* by your man, and this which he brought me this morning. Sir, I dare sit no longer in my waistcoat, nor have any thing worth the danger of a relapse to write. I owe you so much of my health, as I would not mingle you in any occasion of repairing it, and therefore here ask leave to kisse your hands, and bid you good morrow and farewell.

Your very true friend and servant  
J. Donne.

To S<sup>r</sup> H. G.

S<sup>r</sup>,

**I**T should be no interruption to your pleasures, to hear me often say that I love you, and that you are as much my meditations as my self: I often compare not you and me, but the sphear in which your resolutions are, and my wheel; both I hope concentrique to God: for me thinks the new Astronomie is thus appliable well, that we which are a little earth, should rather move towards God, then that he which is fulfilling, and can come no whither, should move towards us. To your life full of variety, nothing is old, nor new to mine; and as to that life, all stickings and hesitations seem stupid and stony, so to this, all fluid slipperinesses, and transitory migrations seem giddie and featherie. In that life one is ever in the porch or postern, going in or out, never within his house himself: It is a garment made of remnants, a life ravelled out into ends, a line discontinued, and a

number of small wretched points, uselesse, because they concurre not: A life built of past and future, not proposing any constant present; they have more pleasures then we, but not more pleasure; they joy oftner, we longer; and no man but of so much understanding as may deliver him from being a fool, would change with a mad-man, which had a better proportion of wit in his often *Lucidis*. You know, they which dwell farthest from the Sun, if in any convenient distance, have longer daies, better appetites, better digestion, better growth, and longer life: And all these advantages have their mindes who are well removed from the scorchings, and dazlings, and exhalings of the worlds glory: but neither of our lives are in such extremes; for you living at Court without ambition, which would burn you, or envy, which would deesse others, live in the Sun, not in the fire: And I which live in the Country without stupefying, am not in darknesse, but in shadow, which is not no light, but a pallid,

wa-



waterish, and diluted one. As all shadows are of one colour, if you respect the body from which they are cast (for our shadows upon clay will be dirty, and in a garden green, and flowery) so all retirings into a shadowy life are alike from all causes, and alike subject to the barbarousnesse and insipid dulnesse of the Country: onely the employments, and that upon which you cast and bestow your pleasure, businesse, or books, gives it the tincture, and beauty. But truly wheresoever we are, if we can but tell our selves truly what and where we would be, we may make any state and place such; for we are so composed, that if abundance, or glory seorch and melt us, we have an earthly cave, our bodies, to go into (by consideration, and cool our selves: and if we be frozen, and contracted with lower and dark fortunes, we have within us a torch, a soul, lighter and warmer then any without: we are therefore our own umbrellas, and our own suns. These, Sir, are the sallads and onions of *Micham*, sent to you with as whole-

wholesome affection as your other friends send Melons and Quelque-chofes from Court and London. If I present you not as good diet as they, I would yet say grace to theirs, and bid much good do it you. I send you, with this, a Letter which I sent to the Countesse. It is not my use nor duty to doe so, but for your having of it, there were but two consents, and I am sure you have mine, and you are sure you have hers. I also writ to her La<sup>p</sup> for the verses she shewed in the garden, which I did not onely to extort them, nor onely to keep my promise of writing, for that I had done in the other Letter, and perchance she hath forgotten the promise; nor onely because I think my Letters just good enough for a progresse, but because I would write apace to her, whilest it is possible to expresse that which I yet know of her, for by this growth I see how soon she will be ineffable.

SIR,

SIR,

**T**Hough my friendship be good for nothing else, it may give you the profit of a tentation, or of an affliction : It may excuse your patience ; and though it cannot allure, it shall importune you. Though I know you have many worthy friends of all rankes, yet I adde something, since I which am of none, would faine be your friend too. There is some of the honour and some of the degrees of a Creation, to make a friendship of nothing. Yet, not to annihilate my self utterly ( for though it seem humbleness, yet it is a work of as much almightiness, to bring a thing to nothing, as from nothing ) though I be not of the best stuffe for friendship, which men of warm and durable fortunes only are, I cannot say, that I am not of the best fashion, if truth and honesty be that ; which I must ever exercise, towards you, because I learned it of you : for the conversation with worthy men, and of good example, ( though it

K

fow

low not vertue in us, yet produceth and ripeneth it. Your mans haste, and mine to *Micham* cuts off this Letter here, yet, as in littell paterns torn from a whole piece, this may tell you what all I am. Though by taking me before my day (which I accounted Tuesday) I make short payment of this duty of Letters, yet I have a little comfort in this, that you see me hereby, willing to pay those debts which I can, before my time.

First Saturday in  
March. 1607.

Your affectionate friend  
J. Donne.

You forget to send me the *Apology*; and many times, I think it an injury to remember one of a promise, lest it confesse a distrust. But of the book, by occasion of reading the Deans answer to it, I have sometimes some want.

To

*To the Countesse of Bedford.*

*Happiest and worthiest Lady,*

I Do not remember that ever I have seen a petition in verse, I would not therefore be singular, nor adde these to your other papers. I have yet adventured so near as to make a petition for verse, it is for those your Ladiship did me the honour to see in *Twicknam* garden, except you repent your making, and having mended your judgement by thinking worse, that is, better, because juster, of their subject. They must needs be an excellent exercise of your wit, which speake so well of so ill: I humbly beg them of your Ladiship, with two such promises, as to any other of your compositions were threatnings: that I will not shew them, and that I will not beleeve them; and nothing should be so used that comes from your brain or breast. If I should confesse a fault in the boldnesse of asking them, or make a fault by doing it in a longer Letter, your Ladiship might

use your stile and old fashion of the Court towards me, and pay me with a Pardon. Here therefore I humbly kisse your Ladiships fair learned hands, and wish you good wishes and speedy grants.

*Your Ladiships servant*  
J. Donne.

*To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.*

**B**Ecause things be conserved by the same means, which established them, I nurse that friendship by Letters, which you begot so: though you have since strengthened it by more solid aliment and real offices. In these Letters from the Country there is this merit, that I do otherwise unwillingly turn mine eye or thoughts from my books, companions in whom there is no falshood nor frowardnesse: which words, I am glad to observe that the holy Authours often joine as expressers and relatives to one another, because else out of a naturall descent to that unworthy fault of frowardnesse, furthered  
with

with that incommodity of a little thinn  
house; I should have mistaken it to be a  
small thing, which now I see equalled  
with the worst. If you have laid my papers  
and books by, I pray let this messenger have  
them, I have determined upon them. If  
you have not, be content to do it, in the  
next three or four days. So, Sir, I kisse your  
hands; and deliver to you an intire and  
clear heart; which shall ever when I am  
with you be in my face and tongue, and  
when I am from you, in my Letters, for I  
will never draw Curtain between you  
and it.

*From your house at  
Micham friday morning.*

*Yours very affectionately  
J. Donne.*

*When you are sometimes at M. Sackvills, I pray  
aske if he have this book, Baldvinus de officio  
pii hominis in controversiis; it was written at the  
conference at Poissy, where Beza was, and he an-  
swered it; I long for it.*



To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Hope you are now welcome to London, and well, and well comforted in your Fathers health and love, and well contented that we ask you how you doe, and tell you how we are, which yet I cannot of my self; If I knew that I were ill, I were well; for we consist of three parts, a Soul, and Body, and Minde: which I call those thoughts and affections and passions, which neither soul nor body hath alone, but have been begotten by their communication, as Musique results out of our breath and a Cornet. And of all these the diseases are cures, if they be known. Of our souls sicknesses, which are finnes, the knowledge is, to acknowledge, and that is her Physique, in which we are not dieted by drams and scruples, for we cannot take too much. Of our bodies infirmities, though our knowledge be partly *ab extrinseco*, from the opinion of the Physitian, and that the subject and matter be

be flexible, and various; yet their rules are certain, and if the matter be rightly applyed to the rule, our knowledge thereof is also certain. But of the diseases of the minde, there is no *Criterium*, no Canon, no rule; for, our own taste and apprehension and interpretation should be the Judge, and that is the disease it self. Therefore sometimes when I finde my self transported with jollity, and love of company, I hang Leads at my heels; and reduce to my thoughts my fortunes, my years, the duties of a man, of a friend, of a husband, of a Father, and all the incumbencies of a family: when sadnesse dejects me, either I countermine it with another sadnesse, or I kindle squibs about me again, and flie into sportfulnesse and company: and I finde ever after all, that I am like an exorcist, which had long laboured about one, which at last appears to have the Mother, that I still mistake my disease. And I still vex my self with this, because if I know it not, no body can know it. And I comfort my self, because

I see dispassioned men are subject to the like ignorances. For divers mindes out of the same thing often draw contrary conclusions, as *Augustine* thought devout *Anthony* to be therefore full of the holy Ghost, because not being able to read, he could say the whole Bible, and interpret it; and *Thyreus* the Jesuit for the same reason doth thinke all the Anabaptists to be possessed. And as often out of contrary things men draw one conclusion. As to the *Roman* Church, magnificence and splendor hath ever been an argument of Gods favour, and poverty & affliction, to the *Greek*. Out of this variety of mindes it proceeds, that though our souls would goe to one end, Heaven, and all our bodies must go to one end, the earth: yet our third part, the minde, which is our naturall guide here, chooses to every man a severall way: scarce any man likes what another doth, nor advisedly, that which himself. But Sir, I am beyond my purpose; I mean to write a Letter, and I am fallen into a discourse, and I do not only  
take

take you from some businesse, but I make you a new businesse by drawing you into these meditations. In which let my opennesse be an argument of such love as I would fain expresse in some worthier fashion.

---

*To Sir G. F.*

SIR,

I Writ to you once this week before; yet I write again, both because it seems a kinde of resisting of grace, to omit any commodity of sending into *England*, and because any Pacquet from me into *England* should go, not only without just freight, but without ballast, if it had not a letter to you. In Letters that I received from Sir H. Wotton yesterday from *Amyens*, I had one of the 8 of *March* from you, and with it one from Mrs. Danterey, of the 28 of *January*: which is a strange disproportion. But Sir, if our Letters come not in due order, and so make not a certain and concurrent chain,

Good

L

yet

yet if they come as Atomes, and so meet at last, by any crooked, and casuall application, they make up, and they nourish bodies of friendship; and in that fashion, I mean one way or other, first or last, I hope all the Letters which have been addressed to us by one another, are safely arrived, except perchance that packet by the Cook be not, of which before this time you are cleare; for I received (as I told you) a Letter by M. Nat. Rich, and if you sent none by him, then it was that Letter, which the Cook tells you he delivered to M. Rich; which, with all my criticismes, I cannot reconcile; because in your last Letter, I find mention of things formerly written, which I have not found. However, I am yet in the same perplexity, which I mentioned before; which is, that I have received no syllable, neither from her self, nor by any other, how my wife hath passed her danger, nor do I know whether I be increased by a childe, or diminished by the losse of a wife. I hear from *England* of many censures of my book,

book, of M<sup>rs</sup>. Drury; if any of those censures do but pardon me my descent in Printing any thing in verse, (which if they do, they are more charitable then my self; for I do not pardon my self, but confesse that I did it against my conscience, that is, against my own opinion, that I should not have done so) I doubt not but they will soon give over that other part of that indictment, which is that I have said so much; for no body can imagine, that I who never saw her, could have any other purpose in that, then that when I had received so very good testimony of her worthinesse, and was gone down to print verses, it became me to say, not what I was sure was just truth, but the best that I could conceive; for that had been a new weaknesse in me, to have praised any body in printed verses, that had not been capable of the best praise that I could give. Presently after Easter we shall (I think) go to *Frankford* to be there at the election, where we shall meet Sir *H Wotton* and Sir *Ro. Rich*, and after that we are de-

terminated to passe some time, in the Palatinate. I go thither with a great deale of devotion; for me thinkes it is a new kinde of piety, that as Pilgrims went heretofore to places which had been holy and happy, so I go to a place now, which shall be so, and more, by the presence of the worthiest Princess of the world, if that marriage proceed. I have no greater errand to the place then that at my return into *England*, I may be the fitter to stand in her presence, and that after I have seen a rich and abundant Countrey, in his best seasons, I may see that Sun which shall always keep it in that height. Howsoever we stray, if you have leasure to write at any time, adventure by no other way, then M. Bruer, at the Queens Armes, a Mercer, in *Cheapside*. I shall omit no opportunity, of which I doubt not to finde more then one before we go from *Paris*. Therefore give me leave to end this, in which if you did not finde the remembrance of my humblest services to my Lady *Bedford*, your love and faith ought to try  
all



all the experiments of pouders, and dryings, and waterings to discover some lines which appeared not; because it is impossible that a Letter should come from me, with such an ungratefull silence.

*Your very true poor friend and  
servant and lover  
J. Donne.*

*This day begins a History, of which I doubt not but I shall write more to you before I leave this town. Monsieur de Rohan, a person for birth, next heire to the Kingdome of Navar, after the Kings children, (if the King of Spaine were weary of it) and for allyance, sonne in law to D. Sally, and for breeding in the wars and estate, the most remarkable man of the Religion, being Governour of S. Jean d' Angeli, one of the most important towns which they of the Religion hold for their security, finding that some distasts between the Lieutenant and the Maior of the town, and him, were dangerously fomented by great persons, stole from Court, rode post to the town and removed these two persons. He sent his secretary, and another dependent of his to give the Queen satisfaction, who is so far from receiving it, that his messengers are committed to the*

Bastile, likely to be presently tortured; all his friends here commanded to their houses, and the Queens companies of light horse sent already thitherward, and foot companies preparing; which troops being sent against a place, so much concerning those of the Religion to keep, and where they abound in number and strength, cannot chuse but produce effects worthy your hearing in the next Letter.

To Sir H. G.

SIR,

**B**Ecause I am in a place and season where I see every thing bud forth, I must do so too, and vent some of my meditations to you; the rather because all other buds being yet without taste or virtue, my Letters may be like them. The pleasantnesse of the season displeases me. Every thing refreshes, and I wither, and I grow older and not better, my strength diminishes, and my load growes, and being to passe more and more stormes, I finde that I have not only cast out all my ballast which nature  
and

and time gives, Reason and discretion, and so am as empty and light as Vanity can make me; but I have over fraught my self with Vice, and so am riddingly subject to two contrary wrackes, Sinking and Over-setting, and under the iniquity of such a disease as inforces the patient when he is almost starved, not only to fast, but to purge. For I have much to take in, and much to cast out; sometimes I thinke it easier to discharge my self of vice then of vanity, as one may sooner carry the fire out of a room then the smoake: and then I see it was a new vanity to think so. And when I think sometimes that vanity, because it is thinne and airie, may be expelled with vertue or businesse, or substantiall vice; I finde that I give entrance thereby to new vices. Certainly as the earth and water, one sad, the other fluid, make but one bodie: so to aire and Vanity, there is but one *Centrum morbi*. And that which later Physicians say of our bodies, is fitter for our mindes: for that which they call Destruction, which is a corruption

ruption and want of those fundamentall parts whereof we consist, is Vice: and that *Collectio stercorum*, which is but the excrement of that corruption, is our Vanity and indiscretion: both these have but one root in me, and must be pulled out at once, or never But I am so farre from digging to it, that I know not where it is, for it is not in mine eyes only, but in every sense, nor in my concupiscence only, but in every power and affection. Sir, I was willing to let you see how impotent a man you love, not to dishearten you from doing so still (for my vices are not infectious, nor wandring, they came not yesterday, nor mean to go away to day: they Inne not, but dwell in me, and see themselves so welcome, and find in me so good bad company of one another, that they will not change, especially to one not apprehensive, nor easily accessible) but I do it, that your counsell might cure me, and if you deny that, your example shal, for I will as much strive to be like you as I will wish you to continue good.

*To the Honourable K<sup>t</sup> S<sup>r</sup> H. Goodere one of the  
Gent. of his Majesties privy Chamber.*

SIR,

**Y**OU may remember that long since you delivered M<sup>r</sup> Fowler possession of me, but the wide distance in which I have lived from Court, makes me reasonably fear, that now he knows not his right and power in me, though he must of necessity have all, to whom you and I joyn in a gift of me, as we did to him, so that perchance he hath a servant of me, which might be passed in a book of concealment. If your leisure suffer it, I pray finde whether I be in him still, and conserve me in his love; and so perfect your own work, or doe it over again, and restore me to the place, which by your favour I had in him. For M<sup>r</sup> Powell who serves her Ma<sup>ty</sup> as Clerk of her counsell, hath told me that M<sup>r</sup> Fowler hath some purpose to retire himself; and therefore I would fain for all my love, have so much of his, as to finde him willing when I shall

M

seek

seek him at Court, to let me understand his purpose therein; for if my means may make me acceptable to the Queen and him, I should be very sorry, he should make so farre steps therein with any other, that I should fail in it, onely for not having spoke to him soon enough. It were an injury to the forwardnesse of your love to adde more; here therefore I kisse your hands, and commend to you the truth of my love.

*From my lodging in the Strand,  
whither I shall return on Monday,  
13 June 1607.*

*Your very affectionate  
servant and lover  
Jo. Donne.*

*To S. H. G.*

SIR,

**Y**OU husband my time thriftily, when you command me to write by such a messenger, as can tell you more then I can write, for so he doth not onely carry the Letter, but is the Letter. But that the naming of some things, may give you occasion to ask him farther, and him to open himself unto you, give me leave to tell you, that the  
now

now Spa. Embassadour proceeds in the old pace, the King hath departed from his ordinary way so farre, as to appoint 9 of the Councell to treat with him; but when they came to any approaches, he answered, that he brought onely Commission to propose certain things, which he was ready to doe, but he had no instructions to treat, but expected them upon an other return from his Master. So that there is no treaty for the marriage begun yet: for I know you have heard *Olivarez* his free acknowledgement, that til the Prince came, there was no thought of it. The King in his gifts of this progress, hath determined it, not as heretofore, at *Windsor*, but at *Farnham* during pleasure: so he is within a journey of *Southampton*; and even that circumstance addes to some other reasons, that he expects the Prince this Summer, and that Sir *W. Crofts*, in his last dispatches, enlarged the Prince in his liberty, from his Father, to come away, if he would. Amongst all the irregularities of this age, to me this is as strange as any, That this year



there is no peace, and yet no sword drawn in the world; & it is a lost conjecture to think which way any of the Armies will bend. Here it is imagined, that *Yukendorfe* and *Gabor* (for, for any concurrence of love, it is but a dream) may so farre distresse *Bohemia*, as that *Tilly* must be recalled thither; and that if he be, *Brunswikes* way is open into *Baviere*, where he may recompense great losses, whilest *Mansfield* and *Gonzales*, and his Excellency and *Spinola*, keep the ballance even in their parts, by looking upon another. This noble friend of yours is in his last minute, in this Town; and I am going into the Coach with my Lo. to *Hanworth*. If I might have forbore the sealing the rest till my return from thence, you might have heard something more from

*Your very true poor friend and humble  
servant in Chr. fef. J. Donne.*

*No straitnesse makes me forget my service to  
your daughters: If my Bell were tolling, I should  
pray for them, and though my Letter be sealing,*

I leave not out my wishes, that their fortunes  
may second their goodnesse. Amen.

To Sir H. G.

SIR,

**T**His Tuesday morning, which hath brought me to London, presents me with all your Letters. Me thought it was a rent day, I mean such as yours, and not as mine; and yet such too, when I considered how much I ought you for them, how good a mother, how fertill and abundant the understanding is, if she have a good father; and how well friendship performs that office. For that which is denied in other generations is done in this of yours: for here is superfetation, childe upon childe, and that which is more strange, twins at a latter conception. If in my second religion, friendship, I had a conscience, either *errantem* to mistake good and bad and indifferent, or *opinantem* to be ravished by others opinions or examples, or *dubiam* to adhere to neither part, or *scrupulosam*

*loſam* to encline to one, but upon reaſons light in themſelves, or indiſcuſſed in me, (which are almoſt all the diſeaſes of conſcience) I might miſtake your often, long, and buſie Letters, and fear you did but intreat me to have mercy upon you and ſpare you; for you know our Court took the reſolution, that it was the beſt way to diſpatch the French Prince back again quickly, to receive him ſolemnly, ceremoniouſly, and expenſively, when he hoped a domeſtique and durable entertainment. I never meant to excell you in weight nor price, but in number and bulk I thought I might, becauſe he may caſt up a greater ſumme who hath but forty ſmall monies, then he with twenty Portugueſſes. The memory of friends, (I mean onely for Letters) neither enters ordinarily into buſied men, becauſe they are ever employed within, nor into men of pleaſure, becauſe they are never at home. For theſe wiſhes therefore which you won out of your pleaſure and recreation, you were as excuſable to me if you writ

writ seldome, as Sir *H. Wotton* is, under the oppression of businesse, or the necessity of seeming so; or more then he, because I hope you have both pleasure and businesse: onely to me, who have neither, this omission were sinne; for though writing be not of the precepts of friendship, but of the counsels, yet, as in some cases to some men counsels become precepts, and though not immediately from God, yet very roundly and quickly from his Church, (as selling and dividing goods in the first time, continence in the Romane Church, and order and decencie in ours) so to me who can do nothing else, it seems to binde my conscience to write; and it is sinne to doe against the conscience, though that erre. Yet no mans Letters might be better wanted then mine, since my whole Letter is nothing else but a confession that I should and would write. I owed you a Letter in verse before by mine own promise, and now that you think that you have hedged in that debt by a greater by your Letter in verse, I think

think it now most seasonable and fashionable for me to break. At least, to write presently, were to accuse my self of not having read yours so often as such a Letter deserves from you to me. To make my debt greater (for such is the desire of all, who cannot or mean not to pay) I pray read these two problemes: for such light flashes as these have been my hawkings in my sorry journies. I accompany them with another ragge of verses, worthy of that name for the smalnesse, and age, for it hath long lien among my other papers, and laughs at them that have adventured to you: for I think till now you saw it not, and neither you, nor it should repent it. Sir, if I were any thing, my love to you might multiply it, and dignifie it: But infinite nothings are but one such; yet since even Chymera's have some name and titles, I am also

*Yours.**To*

*To your selfe.*

SIR,

**I**F this Letter finde you in a progresse, or at *Bath*, or at any place of equall leasure to our *Spá*, you will perchance descend to reade so low meditations as these. Nothing in my *L. of Salisburies* death exercised my poor considerations so much, as the multitude of libells. It was easily discerned, some years before his death, that he was at a defensive war, both for his honour and health, and ( as we then thought ) for his estate: and I thought, that had removed much of the envy. Besides, I have just reasons to think, that in the chiefeſt businesſes between the Nations, he was a very good patriot. But I meant to speake of nothing but the libells, of which, all which are brought into these parts, are so tastelesse and flat, that I protest to you, I think they were made by his friends. It is not the first time that our age hath seen that art practised, That when there are witty and sharp libels made

N

which

which not onely for the liberty of speaking, but for the elegancie, and composition, would take deep root, and make durable impressions in the memory, no other way hath been thought so fit to suppress them, as to divulge some course, and railing one: for when the noise is risen, that libels are abroad, mens curiositie must be served with something: and it is better for the honour of the person traduced, that some blunt downright railings be vented, of which every body is soon weary, then other pieces, which entertain us long with a delight, and love to the things themselves. I doubt not but he smothered some libels against him in his life time. But I would all these (or better) had been made then, for they might then have wrought upon him; and they might have testified that the Author had meant to mend him, but now they can have no honest pretence. I dare say to you, where I am not easily misinterpreted, that there may be cases, where one may do his Countrey good service, by libelling against



gainst a live man. For, where a man is either too great, or his Vices too generall, to be brought under a judiciary accusation, there is no way, but this extraordinary accusing, which we call Libelling And I have heard that nothing hath soupled and allayed the D. of Lerma in his violent greatness, so much as the often libels made up-on him. But after death, it is, in all cases, unexcusable. I know that *Lucifer*, and one or two more of the Fathers who writ libellous books against the Emperours of their times, are excused by our writers, because they writ not in the lives of those Emperours. I am glad for them that they writ not in their lives, for that must have occasioned tumult, and contempt, against so high and Sovereign persons. But that doth not enough excuse them to me, for writing so after their death; for that was ignoble, and uselesse, though they did a little escape the nature of libels, by being subscribed and avowed: which excuse would not have served in the Star-chamber, where sealed

Letters have been judged Libels ; but these of which we speake at this present, are capable of no excuse, no amolishment, and therefore I cry you mercy, and my self too, for disliking them, with so much diligence, for they deserve not that. But Sir, you see by this, and by my Letter of last week, from hence the peremptory barrennesse of this place, from whence we can write nothing into *England*, but of that which comes from thence. Till the Lady *Worster* came hither, I had never heard any thing to make me imagine that Sir *Rob. Rich* was in *England*; the first hour that I had knowledge of it, I kisse his hands by this Letter. I make account to be in *London*, transitorily, about the end of *August*. You shall do me much favour, if I may finde a Letter from you ( if you shall not then be there ) at the Lady *Bartlets*: I shall come home in much ignorance, nor would I discern home by a better light, or any other then you. I can glory of nothing in this voyage, but that I have afflicted my Lady *Bedford* with few Letters.

I protest earnestly to you, it troubles me much more to dispatch a packet into *England*, without a Letter to her, then it would to put in three. But I have been heretofore too immodest towards her, and I suffer this Purgatory for it. We make account to leave this place within 8 or 10 days, and hence to make our best haste to the Count *Maurice*, where we think to finde again the young Palatine: all this I tell you only because when you know, that we shall run too fast to write any more Letters, you may easily pardon the importunities and impertinencies of this, and cast into no lower place of your love

Spâ, 26 July here:  
1612.

*Your very true friend and servant*  
J. Donne.

---

*To my Lord G. H.*

SIR,

I Am near the execution of that purpose for *France*, though I may have other ends, yet if it do but keep me awake, it recom-

N 3

penfes

penſes me well. I am now in the afternoon of my life, and then it is unwholeſome to ſleep. It is ill to look back, or give over in a courſe; but worſe never to ſet out. I ſpeake to you at this time of departing, as I ſhould do at my laſt upon my death-bed; and I deſire to deliver into your hands a heart and affections, as innocent towards you, as I ſhall to deliver my ſoul into Gods hands then. I ſay not this out of diffidence, as though you doubted it, or that this ſhould look like ſuch an excuſe, as implied an accusation; but becauſe my fortune hath burdened you ſo, as I could not rectifie it before my going, my conſcience and interpretation (ſeverer I hope then yours towards my ſelf) calls that a kinde of demerit, but God who hath not only afforded us a way to be delivered from our great many debts, contracted by our Executorſhip to *Adam*, but alſo another for our particular debts after, hath not left poor men unprovided, for diſcharge of morall and civill debts; in which, acknowledge-  
ment

ment, and thankfulnesse is the same, as repentance and contrition is in spiritual debts: and though the value and dignity of all these be not perchance in the things, but in the acceptation, yet I cannot doubt of it, either in God, or you. But Sir, because there is some degree of thankfulnesse in asking more ( for that confesses all former obligations, and a desire to be still in the same dependency ) I must intreat you to continue that wherein you have most expressed your love to me, which is, to maintain me in the same room in my Lady Bedford's opinion, in the which you placed me. I professe to you that I am too much bound to her, for expressing every way her care of my fortune, that I am weary before she is; and out of a loathnesse, that so good works should be bestowed upon so ill stuffe, or that so much ill fortune should be mingled with hers, as that she should misse any thing that she desired, though it were but for me; I am willing to depart from farther exercising her indevours in that kinde. I shall be  
bold

bold to deliver my poor Letters to her Ladyships hands, through yours, whilest I am a broad 'though I shall ever account my self at home, whilest I am in your memory.

*Your affectionate servant and lover*  
J. Donne.

*To Sir H. G.*

*S I R,*

**N**ature hath made all bodies alike, by mingling and kneading up the same elements in every one. And amongst men, the other nature, Custome, hath made every minde like some other; we are patterns, or copies, we informe, or imitate. But as he hath not presently attained to write a good hand, which hath equalled one excellent Master in his *A*, another in his *B*, much lesse he which hath sought all the excellent Masters, and imployed all his time to exceed in one Letter, because not so much an excellency of any, nor every one, as an evennesse and proportion, and respect to one another

another gives the perfection: so is no man vertuous by particular example. Not he that doth all actions to the pattern of the most valiant, or liberall, which Histories afford: nor he which chuses from every one their best actions, and thereupon doth something like those. Perchance such may be *in via perficiendorum*, which Divines allow to Monasticall life, but not *perfectorum*, which by them is only due to Prelacy. For vertue is even, and continuall, and the same, and can therefore break nowhere, nor admit ends, nor beginnings: it is not only not broken, but not tyed together. He is not vertuous, out of whose actions you can pick an excellent one. Vice and her fruits may be seen, because they are thick bodies, but not vertue, which is all light; and vices have swellings and fits, and noise, because being extreame, they dwell far asunder, and they maintain both a forein war against vertue, and a civill against one another, and affect Sovereignty, as vertue doth society. The later Physitians say, that when our

O

naturall



naturall inborn preservative is corrupted or wasted, and must be restored by a like extracted from other bodies; the chief care is that the Mummy have in it no excellling quality, but an equally digested temper: And such is true vertue. But men who have preferred money before all, think they deal honourably with vertue, if they compare her with money: And think that as money is not called base, till the allay exceed the pure; so they are vertuous enough, if they have enough to make their actions currant, which is, if either they get praise, or (in a lower abasing) if they incurre not infamy or penalty. But you know who said, *Angusta innocentia est ad legem bonum esse*: which rule being given for positive Laws, severe mistakers apply even to Gods Law, and (perchance against his Commandment) binde themselves to his Counsailes, beyond his Laws. But they are worse, that thinke that because some men formerly wastfull, live better with half their rents then they did with all, being now advantaged

ged with discretion and experience, therefore our times need lesse moral vertue then the first, because we have Christianity, which is the use and application of all vertue: as though our religion were but an art of thrift, to make a little vertue go far. For as plentifull springs are fittest, and best become large Aqueducts, so doth much vertue such a steward and officer as a Christian. But I must not give you a Homily for a Letter. I said a great while since, that custome made men like; we who have been accustomed to one another are like in this, that we love not businesse: this therefore shall not be to you nor me a busie Letter. I end with a problem, whose errand is, to aske for his fellowes. I pray before you ingulfe your self in the progresse, leave them for me, and such other of my papers as you will lend me till you return. And besides this Allegoricall lending, lend me truely your counsaile, and love God and me, whilest I love him and you.

*Yours humble servant* O. *20* *To*

*To my very true and very good friend  
Sir Henry Goodere.*

*SIR,*

**A**T some later reading, I was more affected with that part of your Letter, which is of the book, and the namelesse Letters, then at first. I am not sorry, for that affection were for a jealousie or suspicion of a flexibilty in you. But I am angry, that any should think, you had in your Religion peccant humours, defective, or abundant, or that such a booke, ( if I mistake it not ) should be able to work upon you; my comfort is, that their judgment is too weak to endanger you, since by this it confesses, that it mistakes you, in thinking you irresolved or various: yet let me be bold to fear, that that sound true opinion, that in all Christian professions there is way to salvation ( which I think you think ) may have been so incommodiouly or intempestively sometimes uttered by you; or else your having friends equally  
near

near you of all the impressions of Religion, may have testified such an indifferency, as hath occasioned some to further such inclinations, as they have mistaken to be in you. This I have feared, because hertofore the inobedient Puritans, and now the over-obedient Papists attempt you. It hath hurt very many, not in their conscience, nor ends, but in their reputation, and ways, that others have thought them fit to be wrought upon. As some bodies are as wholesomly nourished as ours, with Akornes, and endure nakednesse, both which would be dangerous to us, if we for them should leave our former habits, though theirs were the Primitive diet and custome: so are many souls well fed with such formes, and dressings of Religion, as would distemper and misbecome us, and make us corrupt towards God, if any humane circumstance moved it, and in the opinion of men, though none. You shall seldome see a Coyne, upon which the stamp were removed, though to imprint it better, but it

looks awry and squint. And so, for the most part, do mindes which have received divers impressions. I will not, nor need to you, compare the Religions. The channels of Gods mercies run through both fields; and they are sister teats of his graces, yet both diseased and infected, but not both alike. And I think, that as *Copernicifine* in the *Mathematiques* hath carried earth farther up, from the stupid Center; and yet not honoured it, nor advantaged it, because for the necessity of appearances, it hath carried heaven so much higher from it: so the *Roman* profession seems to exhale, and refine our wills from earthly Drugs, and Lees, more then the Reformed, and so seems to bring us nearer heaven; but then that carries heaven farther from us, by making us pass so many Courts, and Offices of Saints in this life, in all our petitions, and lying in a painfull prison in the next, during the pleasure, not of him to whom we go, and who must be our Judge, but of them from whom we come, who know not our case:

Sir,

Sir, as I said last time, labour to keep your alacrity and dignity, in an even temper: for in a dark sadness, indifferent things seem abominable, or necessary, being neither; as trees, and sheep to melancholique night-walkers have unproper shapes. And when you descend to satisfy all men in your own religion, or to excuse others to all, you prostitute your self and your understanding, though not a prey, yet a mark, and a hope, and a subject, for every sophister in Religion to work on. For the other part of your Letter, spent in the praise of the Countesse, I am always very apt to believe it of her, and can never believe it so well, and so reasonably, as now, when it is averred by you; but for the expressing it to her, in that sort as you seem to counsaile, I have these two reasons to decline it. That that knowledge which she hath of me, was in the beginning of a graver course, then of a Poet, into which (that I may also keep my dignity) I would not seem to relapse. The Spanish proverb informes me,

me, that he is a fool which cannot make one Sonnet, and he is mad which makes two. The other stronger reason, is my integrity to the other Countesse, of whose worthinesse though I swallowed your opinion at first upon your words, yet I have had since an explicit faith, and now a knowledge: and for her delight (since she descends to them) I had reserved not only all the verses, which I should make, but all the thoughts of womens worthinesse. But because I hope she will not disdain, that I should write well of her Picture, I have obeyed you thus far, as to write: but intreat you by your friendship, that by this occasion of versifying, I be not traduced, nor esteemed light in that Tribe, and that house where I have lived. If those reasons which moved you to bid me write be not constant in you still, or if you meant not that I should write verses; or if these verses be too bad, or too good, over or under her understanding, and not fit; I pray receive them, as a companion and supplement of this  
Letter



Letter to you ; and as such a token as I use to send, which use, because I wish rather they should serve (except you wish otherwise) I send no other ; but after I have told you, that here at a Christning at *Peckam*, you are remembred by divers of ours, and I commanded to tell you so, I kisse your hands, and so seal to you my pure love, which I would not refuse to do by any labour or danger.

*Your very true friend and servant*  
J. Donne.

---

*To Sr G.M.*

**I**F you were here, you would not think me importune, if I bid you good morrow every day ; and such a patience will excuse my often Letters. No other kinde of conveyance is better for knowledge, or love : What treasures of Morall knowledge are in *Senecaes* Letters to onely one *Lucilius* ? and what of Naturall in *Plinies* ? how much of the storie of the time, is in *Ciceroes* Letters ?

ters? And how all of these times, in the Jesuites Eastern and Western Epistles? where can we finde so perfect a Character of *Phalaris*, as in his own Letters, which are almost so many writs of Execution? Or of *Brutus*, as in his privie seals for monie? The Evangiles and Acts, teach us what to beleeve, but the Epistles of the Apostles what to do. And those who have endeavoured to dignifie *Seneca* above his worth, have no way fitter, then to imagine Letters between him and *S. Paul*. As they think also that they have expressed an excellent person, in that Letter which they obtrude, from our B. Saviour to King *Agabarus*. The Italians, which are most discursive, and think the world owes them all wisdom, abound so much in this kinde of expressing, that *Michel Montaigne* saies, he hath seen, (as I remember) 400 volumes of Italian Letters. But it is the other capacity which must make mine acceptable, that they are also the best conveyers of love. But, though all knowledge be in those Authors already, yet,

yet, as some poisons, and some medicines, hurt not, nor profit, except the creature in which they reside, contribute their lively activitie, and vigor; so, much of the knowledge buried in Books perisheth, and becomes ineffectuall, if it be not applied, and refreshed by a companion, or friend. Much of their goodnesse, hath the same period, which some Physicians of *Italy* have observed to be in the biting of their *Tarentola*, that it affects no longer, then the flie lives. For with how much desire we read the papers of any living now, (especially friends) which we would scarce allow a boxe in our cabinet, or shelf in our Library, if they were dead? And we do justly in it, for the writings and words of men present, we may examine, controll, and expostulate, and receive satisfaction from the authors; but the other we must beleieve, or discredit; they present no mean. Since then at this time, I am upon the stage, you may be content to hear me. And now that perchance I have brought you to it, (as *Thom. Badger* did

the King) now I have nothing to say. And it is well, for the Letter is already long enough, else let this probleme supply, which was occasioned by you, of women wearing stones; which, it seems, you were afraid women should read, because you avert them at the beginning, with a protestation of cleanliness. *Martiall* found no way fitter to draw the *Romane Matrons* to read one of his Books, which he thinks most morall and cleanly, then to counsell them by the first Epigram to skip the Book, because it was obscene. But either you write not at all for women, or for those of sincerer palates. Though their unworthinesse, and your own ease be advocates for me with you, yet I must adde my entreaty, that you let goe no copy of my Problems, till I review them. If it be too late, at least be able to tell me who hath them.

Yours,

J. Donne.

To

To S<sup>r</sup> H. G.

**I** Send not my Letters as tribute, nor interest, not recompense, nor for commerce, nor as testimonials of my love, nor provokers of yours, nor to justify my custome of writing, nor for a vent and utterance of my meditations; for my Letters are either above or under all such offices; yet I write very affectionately, and I chide and accuse my self of diminishing that affection which sends them, when I ask my self why: onely I am sure that I desire that you might have in your hands Letters of mine of all kindes, as conveyances and deliverers of me to you, whether you accept me as a friend, or as a patient, or as a penitent, or as a beadsman, for I decline no jurisdiction, or refuse any tenure. I would not open any doore upon you, but look in when you open it. Angels have not, nor affect not other knowledge of one another, then they list to reveal to one another. It is then in this onely, that friends are Angels, that they

are capable and fit for such revelations when they are offered. If at any time I seem to studie you more inquisitively, it is for no other end but to know how to present you to God in my prayers, and what to ask of him for you; for even that holy exercise may not be done inopportunately, nor importunately. I finde little error in that Grecians counsell, who saies, If thou ask any thing of God, offer no sacrifice, nor ask elegantly, nor vehemently, but remember that thou wouldest not give to such an asker: Nor in his other Countreiman, who affirms sacrifice of blood to be so unproportionable to God, that perfumes, though much more spirituall, are too grosse. Yea words which are our subtillest and delicatest outward creatures, being composed of thoughts and breath, are so muddie, so thick, that our thoughts themselves are so, because (except at the first rising) they are ever leavened with passions and affections: And that advantage of nearer familiarity with God, which the act of incarnation gave

gave us, is groundd upon Gods assuming us, not our going to him. And, our accesss to his prelsence are but his descents into us; and when we get any thing by prayer, he gave us before-hand the thing and the petition. For, I scarce think any ineffectuall prayer free from both sin, and the punishment of sin: yet as God sposed a seventh of our time for his exterior worship, and as his Christian Church early presented him a type of the whole year in a Lent, and after imposed the obligation of canonique hours, constituting thereby morall Sabbaths every day; I am farre from dehorting those fixed devotions: But I had rather it were bestowed upon thanksgiving then petition, upon praise then prayer; not that God is indeared by that, or wearied by this; all is one in the receiver, but not in the sender: and thanks doth both offices; for, nothing doth so innocently provoke new graces, as gratitude. I would also rather make short prayers then extend them, though God can neither be  
sur-



surprised, nor besieged : for, long prayers have more of the man, as ambition of eloquence, and a complacencie in the work, and more of the Devil by often distractions : for, after in the beginning we have well intreated God to hearken, we speak no more to him. Even this Letter is some example of such infirmitie, which being intended for a Letter, is extended and strayed into a Homilie. And whatsoever is not what it was purposed, is worse, therefore it shall at last end like a Letter by assuring you I am

---

*To your selfe.*

SIR,

**S**Ir *Germander Pool*, your noble friend and fellow in Armes, hath been at this house. I finde by their diligent inquiring from me, that he hath assured them that he hath much advanced your proceeding, by his resignation ; but cooled them again with this, that the *L. Spencer* pretends in his

his room. I never feared his, nor any mans diligence in that; I feared onely your remifnesse, because you have a fortune that can endure, and a nature that can almost be content to misse. But I had rather you exercised your Philosophy and evenness in some things else. He doth not nothing which falls cleanly and harmelesly; but he wrattles better which stands. I know you can easily forgive your self any negligences and slacknesses, but I am glad that you are ingaged to so many friends, who either by your self, or fame have knowledge of it. In all the rest of them there is a worthinesse, and in me a love which deserves to be satisfied. In this therefore, as you are forward in all things else, be content to do more for your friends then you would for your self; endeavour it, that is effect it.

*Tuesday.*

*Your very true friend and lover*

*J. Donne.*

*To*

To Sir H. G.

SIR,

**I**N the History or Style of friendship,  
which is best written both in deeds and  
words, a Letter which is of a mixed nature,  
and hath something of both, is a mixed Pal-  
rentthesis: It may be left out, yet it contri-  
butes, though not to the being, yet to the  
verdure, and freshnesse thereof. Letters  
have truly the same office, as oaths. As these  
amongst light and empty men, are but fil-  
lings, and pauses, and interjections; but  
with weightier, they are sad attestations: So  
are Letters to some complement, and oblig-  
ation to others. For mine, as I never au-  
thorized my servant to lie in my behalfe,  
(for if it were officious in him, it might be  
worse in me) so I allow my Letters much  
lesse that civill dishonesty, both because they  
go from me more considerately, and be-  
cause they are permanent; for in them I may  
speak to you in your chamber a year hence  
before I know now whom, and not hear my  
self.

self. They shall therefore ever keep the sincerity and intemperatenesse of the fountain, whence they are derived. And as wheresoever these leaves fall, the root is in my heart, so shall they, as that sucks good affections towards you there, have ever true impressions thereof. Thus much information is in very leaves, that they can tell what the tree is, and these can tell you I am a friend, and an honest man. Of what generall use, the fruit should speake, and I have none: and of what particular profit to you, your application and experimenting should tell you, and you can make none of such a nothing; yet even of barren Sycamores, such as I, there were use, if either any light flashings, or scorching vehemencies, or sudden showres made you need so shadowy an example or remembrance. But (Sir) your fortune and minde do you this happy injury, that they make all kinde of fruits uselesse unto you; Therefore I have placed my love wisely where I need communicate nothing. All this; though perchance you

read it not till Michaelmas, was told you at  
Micham, 15. August. 1607.

*To my most worthy friend Sir, Henry Goodere.*

SIR,

**B**Ecause evennesse conduces as much to  
strength and firmnesse as greatnesse  
doth, I would not discontinue my course  
of writing. It is a sacrifice, which though  
friends need not, friendship doth; which  
hath in it so much divinity, that as we must  
be ever equally disposed inwardly so to  
doe or suffer for it, so we must sepole some  
certain times for the outward service there-  
of, though it be but formall and testimoni-  
all that time to me towards you is Tuesday,  
and my Temple, the Rose in Smith-field.  
If I were by your appointment your Refe-  
rendarie for news, I should write but short  
Letters, because the times are barren. The  
low Countries, which used to be the Mart  
of news for this season, suffering also, or ra-  
ther enjoying a vacation. Since therefore I  
am.

am but mine own Secretary (and what's that?) I were excusable if I writ nothing, since I am so: Besides that, your much knowledge brings you this disadvantage, that as stomachs accustomed to delicacies, finde nothing new or pleasing to them when they are sick; so you can hear nothing from me (though the Countrey perchance make you hungry) which you know not. Therefore in stead of a Letter to you, I send you one to another, to the best Lady, who did me the honour to acknowledge the receipt of one of mine, by one of hers; and who only hath power to cast the fetters of verse upon my free meditations: It should give you some delight, and some comfort, because you are the first which see it, and it is the last which you shall see of this kinde from me.

Micham the  
14 August.

*Your very affectionate lover and servant*

J. Donne.

To Sir I. H.

SIR,  
**I** Would not omit this, not Commodity,  
 but Advantage of writing to you. This  
 emptinesse in London, dignifies any Letter  
 from hence, as in the seasons, earlinesse and  
 latenesse, makes the sowrenesse, and after  
 the sweetnesse of fruits, acceptable and gra-  
 cious. We often excuse and advance mean  
 Authors, by the age in which they lived,  
 so will your love do this Letter, and you  
 will tell your self, that if he which writ it  
 knew wherein he might expresse his affecti-  
 on, or any thing which might have made  
 his Letter welcommer, he would have done  
 it. As it is, you may accept it so, as we do  
 many *China* manufactures, of which  
 when we know no use, yet we satisfie our  
 curiosity in considering them, because we  
 knew not how, nor of what matter they  
 were made. Near great woods and quar-  
 ries it is no wonder to see faire houses,  
 but in *Holland* which wants both, it is.

So



So were it for me who am as farre removed from Court, and knowledge of forein passages, as this City is now from the face and furniture of a City, to build up a long Letter and to write of my self, were but to inclose a poor handfull of straw for a token in a Letter; yet I will tell you, that I am at London onely to provide for Monday, when I shall use that favour which my Lady Bedford hath afforded me, of giving her name to my daughter; which I mention to you, as well to shew that I cover any occasion of a gratefull speaking of her favours, as that, because I have thought the day is likely to bring you to London, I might tell you, that my poor house is in your way and you shall there finde such company, as (I think) you will not be loth to accompany to London.

6 Aug. 1608.

Your very humble friend

I Doane.

*To Sir H. Wootton.*

*SIR,*  
**T**Hat which is at first but a visitation,  
and a civill office, comes quickly to  
be a haunting, and an uncivill importunity:  
my often writing might be subject to such  
a misinterpretation, if it were not to you,  
who as you know that the affection which  
suggests and dictates them, is ever one, and  
continuell, and uninterrupted; may be  
pleased to think my Letters so too, and that  
all the pieces make but one long Letter, and  
so I know you would not grudge to read  
any intire book of mine, at that pace, as  
you do my Letters, which is a lease a week:  
especially such Letters as mine, which (per-  
chance out of the dulnesse of the place) are  
so empty of any relations, as that they op-  
presse not your meditations, nor discourse,  
nor memory. You know that for aire we  
are sure we apprehend and enjoy it, but  
when this aire is rarified into fire, we begin  
to dispute whether it be an element, or no:

so

so when Letters have a convenient handsome body of news, they are Letters; but when they are spun out of nothing, they are nothing, or but apparitions, and ghosts, with such hollow sounds, as he that hears them, knows not what they said: You (I think) and I am much of one sect in the Philosophy of love, which though it be directed upon the minde, doth inhere in the body, and find piety entertainment there: so have Letters for their principall office, to be seals and testimonies of mutuall affection, but the materialls and fuell of them should be a confident and mutuall communicating of those things which we know. How shall I then who know nothing write Letters? Sir, I learn knowledge enough out of yours to me. I learn that there is truth and firmnesse and an earnestness of doing good alive in the world; and therefore, since there is so good company in it, I have not so much desire to go out of it, as I had, if my fortune would afford me any room in it. You know I have been no coward, nor

R

un-

unindustrious in attempting that, nor will I give it over yet. If at last, I must confesse, that I dyed ten years ago, yet as the Primitive Church admitted some of the Jews Ceremonies, not for perpetuall use, but because they would bury the Synagogue honourably, though I dyed at a blow then when my courses were diverted, yet it wil please me a little to have had a long funerall, and to have kept my self so long above ground without putrefaction. But this is melancholique discourse, To change therefore from this Metaphoricall death to the true, and that with a little more relish of mirth, let me tell you the good nature of the executioner of Paris: who when *Vatan* was beheaded, (who dying in the profession of the Religion, had made his peace with God in the prison, and so said nothing at the place of execution) swore he had rather execute forty Huguenots, then one Catholique, because the Huguenot used so few words, and troubled him so little, in respect of the dilatory ceremonies of the others

others, in dying. *Cotton* the great Count *Je-*  
*suite* hath for importuned the *Q.* to give  
 some modifications to the late interlocto-  
 ry arrest against the *Jesuits*, that in his pre-  
 sence, the *C. S. J.*, who had been present in  
 the Court at the time of the arrest, and *Se-*  
*ign* the Kings Advocate, who urged it,  
 and the *Premier president*, were sent for:  
 They came so well provided with their  
 books, out of which they assigned to the *Q.*  
 so many, so evident places of seditious  
 doctrine, that the *Q.* was well satisfied,  
 that it was so by all means to provide a-  
 gainst the teaching of the like doctrine in  
*France*. The *D. of Espemon* is come to *Paris*,  
 with (they say) 600 horse in his train, all  
 which company, came with him into the  
 Court: which is an insolency remarkable  
 here. They say that scarce any of the Princes  
 appear in the streets, but with very great  
 trains. No one enemy could wash the qua-  
 sors of *France* so much, as so many friends  
 do: for the *Q.* dares scarce deny any, that so  
 she may have the better leave to make haste

to advance her Marquis of *Ancre*, of whose greatnesse, for matter of command, or danger, they have no great fear, he being no very capable nor stirring man: and then for his drawing of great benefits from the *Q.* they make that use of it, that their suits passe with lesse opposition. I beleeve the treasure is scattered, because I see the future receipt charged with so very many and great pensions. The *Q.* hath adventured a little to stop this rage of the Princes importunity, by denying a late suit of *Soissons*: which though the other Princes grudge not that *Soisson* should faile, for he hath drawn infinite sums already, yet they resent it somewhat tenderly, that any of them should be denyed, when the Marquis obtains. That which was much observed in the Kings more childish age, when I was last here, by those whom his father appointed to judge, by an assiduous observation, his naturall inclination, is more and more confirmed, that his inclinations are cruell, and tyrannous; and when he is any way

way affected, his stammering is so extreme, as he can utter nothing. They cannot draw him to look upon a son of the Marquis, whom they have put into his service. And he was so extremely affectionate towards the younger son of *Beaufort*, that they have removed him to a charge which he hath, as he is made Prieur of *Malta*; but yet there passe such Letters between them, by stealth and practise, as (though it be between children) it is become a matter of State, and much diligence used to prevent the Letters. For the young Marquis of *Verueil*, the K. speaks often of transplanting him into the Church, and once this Christmas delighted himself to see his young brother in a *Cardinals* habit. Sir, it is time to take up, for I know, that any thing, from this place, as soon as it is certain, is stale. I have been a great while more mannierly towards my Lady *Bedford*, then to trouble her with any of mine own verses, but having found these French verses accompanied with a great deal of repu-



ration here, I could not forbear to take her  
 leave to send them. I writ to you by Mr.  
 Pory the 17 of Jan. here and he carried that  
 Letter to Paris, to gather news, like a snow-  
 ball. He told me that Pinder is gone to Con-  
 stantinople with Commission to remove and  
 succeed Glanville: I am afraid you have neg-  
 lected that business. Continue me in Mr.  
 Martins good opinion: I know I shall ne-  
 ver fall from it, by any demerit of mine, and  
 I know I need not fear it; out of any slack-  
 nesse or slipperiness in him, but much busi-  
 nesse may strangle me in him. When it  
 shall not trouble you to write to me, I pray  
 do me the favour to tell me, how many you  
 have received from me; for I have now  
 much just reason to imagine, that some of  
 my Pacquets have had more honour then  
 I wished them: which is to be delivered  
 into the hands of greater personages; then I  
 addressed them unto. Hold me still in your  
 own love, and protect in that noble testi-  
 mony of it, of which your Letter by Mr.  
 Pory spoke, which is the only Letter that

I have received, since I came away ) and  
believe me that I shall ever with much af-  
fection, and much devotion joine both  
your fortune and your last best happinesse,  
with the desire of mine own in all my ev-  
ill, and divine wishes, as the only retri-  
bution in the power of

*Your affectionate servant*

*Jo. Donne,*

---

*To the Honorable Knight Sir H. Goddard.*

I would go out of my way for excuses,  
I or if I did not go out of my way from  
there; I might avoid writing now because  
I cannot chuse but know, that you have in  
this town abler servants, and better under-  
standing the persons and passages of this  
Court. But my hope is not in the applica-  
tion of other mens merits, to get however  
abundant. Besides, oh is town hath since our  
coming hither, afforded enough for all  
to say. That which was done here the 23.  
of March, and which was so long called a  
pub-

publication of the marriages, was no otherwise publique then that the Spa. Ambassador, having that day an audience delivered to the Queen that his Master was well pleased with all those particulars which had been formerly treated. And the French Ambassador in Spain is said to have had instruction, to do the same office in that Court, the same day. Since that, that is to say, these 4 last days, it hath been solemnized with more outward bravery then this Court is remembred to have appeared in. The main bravery was the number of horses which were above 800 Caparazond. Before the daies, the town was full of the 5 Challengers cartells, full of Rodomontades: but in the execution, there were no personall reencounters, nor other triall of any ability, then running at the Quintain, and the Ring. Other particulars of this, you cannot chuse but hear too much, since at this time there cometo you so many French men. But lest you should beleieve too much, I present you these 2 precautions, that for their

Geu-

Gendarmery, there was no other trial then I told you ; & for their bravery, no true stuffe. You must of necessity have heard often of a Book written against the Popes jurisdiction, about three moneths since, by one *Richer*, a D<sup>r</sup> and Syndique of the Sorbonists, which Book hath now been censured by an assembly of the Clergie of this Archbishoprick, promoted with so much diligence by the Cardinal *Peroun*, that for this businesse he hath intermitted his replie to the Kings answer, which now he retires to intend seriously : I have not yet had the honour to kisse his Graces hand, though I have received some half-invitations to do it. *Richer* was first accused to the Parliament, but when it was there required of his delators to insift upon some propositions in his Book, which were either against Scripture, or the Gallican Church, they desisted in that pursuit. But in the censure which the Clergie hath made, though it be full of modifications and reservations of the rights of the King, and the Gallican

S

Chur-

Churches, there is this iniquitie, that being to be published by commandement of the Assembly, in all the Churches of *Paris*, which is within that Diocese, and almost all the Curates of the Parishes of *Paris* being Sorbonists, there is by this means a strong party of the Sorbonists themselves raised against *Richer*; yet against this censure, and against three or four which have opposed *Richer* in print, he meditates an answer. Before it should come forth I desired to speak with him, for I had said to some of the Sorbonist of his party, that there was no proposition in his Book, which I could not shew in Catholique authors of 300 years: I had from him an assignation to meet, and at the hour he sent me his excuse, which was, that he had been traduced to have had conference with the Ambassadors of *England*, and the States, and with the D. of *Borillon*, and that he had accepted a pension of the King of *England*; and withall, that it had been very well testified to him that day, that the Jesuits had offered to corrupt

rupt men with rewards to kill him. Which I doubt not but he apprehended for true, because a messenger whom I sent to fixe another time of meeting with him, found him in an extreme trembling, and irresolutions: so that I had no more, but an intreaty to forbear comming to his house, or drawing him out of it, till it might be without danger or observation. They of the Religion held a Synod at this time in this Town, in which the principall businesse is to rectifie, or at least to mature, against their Provinciaall Synod, which shall be held in *May*, certain opinions of *Tilenus* a Divine of *Sedan*, with which the Churches of *France* are scandalized. The chief point is, Whether our salvation be to be attributed to the passive merit of Christ, which is his death, or to his active also, which is his fulfilling of the Law. But I doubt not but that will be well composed, if *Tilenus* who is here in person with two other assistants, bring any disposition to submit himself to the Synod, and not onely

to dispute. I doe (I thank God) naturally and heartily abhorre all schism in Religion so much, as, I protest, I am sorry to finde this appearance of schism amongst our adversaries the Sorbonists; for I had rather they had held together, to have made a head against the usurpations of the Ro. Church, then that their disuniting should so enfeeble them, as that the Parliament should be left alone to stand against those tyrannies. Sir, you will pardon my extravagancies in these relations. I look upon nothing so intently as these things, nor fals there any thing within my knowledge, which I would conceal from you. Though it concern not you to know it, yet me thinks it concerns me to tell it. That Cook of which you writ to me, is come hither, and hath brought me other Letters, but not those of which you writ to me, which paquet, he saies, you received again of him; whether by his falsehood, or by your diligence in seeking a worthier messenger, I know not; but I am sure I never lost any thing with more sorrow,



row, because I am thereby left still in uncertainties, and irresolutions, of that which I desire much to know in womens busineses. If you write this way any more, chuse no other means, then by M<sup>r</sup> Bruer at the Queens Arms a Mercer in *Cheapside*: he shall alwaies know where we are, and we are yet in a purpose to go from hence within a fortnight, and dispose our selves to be at *Frankford* the 25 of *May*, when the election of the Emperor shall be there. Though I be meerly passive in all this pilgrimage, yet I shall be willing to advance that design; because upon my promise that I would doe so, Sir *Rob. Rich* gave me his, that he would divert from his way to *Italy* so much, as to be there then. When I came to this Town I found M<sup>r</sup> *Matthew*, diligent to finde a means to write to you; so that at this time, when there go so many, I cannot doubt but he provides himself, therefore I did not ask his commandement, nor offer him the service of this Pacquet. Sir, you are not evener to your self, in your most

generall wishes of your own good, then I am in my particular, of which none rises in me, that is not bent upon your enjoying of peace and reposednesse in your fortunes, in your affections, and in your conscience; more then which I know not how to wish to

Paris the 9 Apr.  
1612. here.

Your very affectionate servant and  
lover J. Donne.

To Sir H. Wotton.

Octob. the 4<sup>th</sup> 1612. almost ad midnight.

S I R,

**A**LL our moralities are but our out-works, our Christianity is our Citadel; a man who considers duty but the dignity of his being a man; is not easily beat from his outworks, but from his Christianity never; and therefore I dare trust you, who contemplates them both. Every distemper of the body now, is complicated with the spleen, and when we were young men  
we

we scarce ever heard of the Spleen. In our declinations now, every accident is accompanied with heavy clouds of melancholy; and in our youth we never admitted any. It is the Spleen of the minde, and we are affected with vapors from thence; yet truly, even this sadnesse that overtakes us, and this yeelding to the sadnesse, is not so vehement a poison (though it be no Physick neither) as those false waies, in which we sought our comforts in our looser daies. You are able to make rules to your self, and our B. Saviour continue to you an ability to keep within those rules. And this particular occasion of your present sadnesse must be helped by the rule, for, for examples you will scarce finde any, scarce any that is not encombred and distressed in his fortunes. I had locked my self, sealed and secured my self against all possibilities of falling into new debts, and in good faith, this year hath thrown me 400<sup>l</sup> lower then when I entred this house. I am a Father as well as you, and of children (I humbly thank God) of

as good dispositions; and in saying so, I make account that I have taken my comparison as high as I could goe; for in good faith, I beleeve yours to be so: but as those my daughters (who are capable of such considerations) cannot but see my desire to accommodate them in this world, so I think they will not murmur if heaven must be their Nunnery, and they associated to the B. virgins there: I know they would be content to passe their lives in a Prison, rather then I should macerate my self for them, much more to suffer the mediocrity of my house, and my means, though that cannot preferre them: yours are such too, and it need not that patience, for your fortune doth not so farre exercise their patience. But to leave all in Gods hands, from whose hands nothing can be wrung by whining but by praying, nor by praying without the *Fiat voluntas tua*. Sir, you are used to my hand, and, I think have leisure to spend some time in picking out sense, in ragges; else I had written lesse, and

in longer time. Here is room for an *Amen*;  
the prayer ---- so I am going to my  
bedside to make for all you and all yours,  
with

*Your true friend and servant in Chr. Jesus*  
J. Donne.

A. V. *Merced.*

SIR,

I Write not to you out of my poor Libra-  
ry, where to cast mine eye upon good  
Authors kindles or refreshes sometimes  
meditations not unfit to communicate to  
near friends; nor from the high way,  
where I am contracted, and inverted into  
my self; which are my two ordinary for-  
ges of Letters to you. But I write from the  
fire side in my Parler, and in the noise of  
three gamesome children; and by the side  
of her, whom because I have transplanted  
into a wretched fortune, I must labour to  
disguise that from her by all such honest  
devices, as giving her my company, and  
discourse, therefore I steal from her, all the  
T time

time which I give this Letter, and it is therefore that I take so short a list, and gallop so fast over it, I have not been out of my house since I received your pacquet. As I have much quenched my senses, and disused my body from pleasure, and so tried how I can indure to be mine own grave, so I try now how I can suffer a prison. And since it is but to build one wall more about our soul, she is still in her own Center, how many circumferences soever fortune or our own perversnesse cast about her, I would I could as well intreat her to go on, as she knows whither to go. But if I melt into a melancholy whilst I write, I shall be taken in the manner; and I sit by one too tender towards these impressions, and it is so much our duty, to avoid all occasions of giving them sad apprehensions, as *S. Hierome* accuses *Adam* of no other fault in eating the Apple, but that he did it. *Ne contristaretur delicias suas*. I am not carefull what I write, because the inclosed Letters may dignifie this ill favoured bark, and they need not  
grudge

grudge so course a countenance, because  
they are now to accompany themselves, my  
man fetched them, and therefore I can say  
no more of them then themselves say, *M<sup>rs</sup>*  
*Meaully* intreated me by her Letter to hasten  
hers, as I think, for by my troth I cannot  
read it. My Lady was dispatching in so  
much haste for *Twickenham*, as she gave no  
word to a Letter which I sent with yours,  
of *Sir Tho. Bartlet*, I can say nothing, nor  
of the plague, though your Letter bid me. I  
but that he diminishes, the other increases,  
but in what proportion I am not clear. To  
them at *Hammersmith*, and *M<sup>rs</sup> Herben* I  
will do your command. If I have been  
good in hope, or can promise any little of-  
fices in the future probably, it is comfort-  
able, for I am the worst preacher in the  
world, yet the instant, though it be nothing,  
joynes times together, and therefore this  
unprofitableness, since I have been, and will  
still endeavour to be so, shall not interrepe-  
me now from being

*Your servant and lover* J. Donne.



To the best Knight Sir H. Wootton.

SIR,

**V**Vhen I saw your good Countesse last, she let me think that her message by her foot-man would hasten you up. And it furthered that opinion in me, when I knew how near M. Mathews day of departing this kingdome was. To counterpoise both these, I have a little Letter from you brought to me to Micham yesterday, but left at my lodging two days sooner : and because that speaks nothing of your return, I am content to be perplexed in it : and as in all other, so in this perplexity to do that which is safest. To me it is safest to write, because it performs a duty, and leaves my conscience well : and though it seem not safest for the Letter, which may perish, yet I remember, that in the Crociate for the warres in the Holy Land, and so in all Pilgrimages enterprised in devotion, he which dies in the way, enjoyes all the benefit and indulgences which

which the end did afford. Howsoever, all that can encrease the danger of your Letter, encrease my merit; for, as where they immolate men, it is a a scanter devotion, to sacrifice one of many slaves or of many children, or an onely child, then to beget and bring up one purposely to sacrifice it, so if I ordain this Letter purposely for destruction, it is the largest expressing of that kinde of piety, and I am easie to beleieve (because I wish it) your hast hither: Not that I can fear any slacknesse in that business which drew you down, because your fortune and honour are a paire of good spurs to it; but here also you have both true businesse and many *Quasi negotia*, which go two and two to a businesse; which are visitations, and such, as though they be not full businesses, yet are so near them that they serve as for excuses, in omisions of the other. As when abjurations was in use in this land, the State and law was satisfied if the abjurator came to the sea side, and waded into the sea, when windes and tydes re-

sisted, so we think our selves justly excusable to our friends and our selves, if when we should do businesse, we come to the place of businesse, as Courts and the houses of great Princes and officers. I do not so much intimate your infirmity in this, as frankly confesse mine own. The master of Latine language says, *Oculi & aures aliorum te speculantur & custodiunt*. So those two words are synonimous, & only the observation of others upon me, is my preservation from extreame idlenesse, else I professe, that I hate businesse so much, as I am sometimes glad to remember, that the Roman Church reads that verse *A negotio perambulante in tenebris*, which we reade from the pestilence walking by night, so equall to me do the plague and businesse deserve avoiding, but you will neither beleeve that I abhor businesse, if I inlarge this Letter, nor that I would afford you that ease which I affect, Therefore returne to your pleasures.

March 14. 1607.

Your unprossablest friend  
Jo. Donne.

*It is my third Letter: which I tell you, because I found not M<sup>r</sup>. Rogers, but lest the Letter which I sent last, with a stranger at Cliffords Inne.*

*To Sir H. G.*

SIR,

**T**HIS 14 of November last I received yours of the 9, as I was in the street going to sup with my Lady Bedford, I found all that company forepossessed with a wonder why you came not last saturday. I perceive, that as your intermitting your Letters to me, gave me reason to hope for you, so some more direct addresse or conscience of your businesse here, had imprinted in them an assurance of your comming, this Letter shall but talke, not discourse; it shall but gossip, not consider, nor consult, so it is made halfe with a prejudice of being lost by the way. The King is gone this day for *Roxton*: and hath left with the Queen a commandment to meditate upon

a Masque for Christmas, so that they grow serious about that already; that will hasten my Lady *Bedfords* journey, who goes within ten days from hence to her Lord, but by reason of this, can make no long stay there. *Justinian* the *Venetian* is gone hence, and one *Carraw* come in his place: that State hath taken a fresh offence at a Friar, who refused to absolve a Gentleman, because he would not expresse in confession what books of Father *Paul*, and such, he knew to be in the hands of any others; the State commanded him out of that territory in three hours warning, and he hath now submitted himself, and is returned as prisoner for *Mantua*, and so remains as yet. Sir *H. Wootton* who writ hither, addes also that upon his knowledge there are 14000 as good Protestants as he in that State. The Duke *Joyeuse* is dead, in *Primont*, returning from *Rome*, where *M. Mole* who went with the *L. Rosse*, is taken into the Inquisition, and I see small hope of his recovery ( for he had in some translations of *Plessis* books talked

talked of *Babylon* and *Antichrist*. Except it fall out that one *Strange* a Jesuit in the Tower, may be accepted for him. To come a little nearer my self, Sir *Geffery Fenton* one of his Majesties Secretaries in *Ireland* is dead; and I have made some offer for the place, in preservation whereof, as I have had occasion to imploy all my friends, so I have not found in them all (except *Bedford*) more haile and words (for when those two are together, there is much comfort even in the least) then in the *L. Hay*. In good faith he promised so roundly, so abundantly, so profusely, as I suspected him, but performed what ever he undertook, (and my requests were the measures of his undertakings) so readily and truly, that his complements became obligations, and having spoke like a Courtier, did like a friend. This I tell you, because being farre under any ability of expressing my thankfulness to him by any proportionall service, I do, as much as I can, thank him by thanking of you, who begot, or nursed these good

impressions of me in him. Sir, as my discretion would do, my fortune doth bring all my debts into one hand, for I owe you what ever Court friends do for me, yea, whatsoever I do for my self, because you almost importune me, to awake and stare the Court in the face. I know not yet what conjecture to make of the event. But I am content to go forward a little more in the madnesse of missing rather then not pretend; and rather wear out, then rust. It is extreme late; and as this Letter is nothing, so if ever it come to you, you will know it without a name, and therefore I may end it here.

---

*To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.*

S I R,

**T**Hough you escape my lifting up of your latch by removing, you cannot my Letters; yet of this Letter I do not much accuse my self, for I serve your Commandment in it, for it is only to convey to you this.



this paper opposed to those, with which you trusted me. It is (I cannot say the waightiest, but truly) the saddest lucubration and nights passage that ever I had. For it exercised those hours, which, with extreme danger of her, whom I should hardly have abstained from recompensing for her company in this world, with accompanying her out of it, encreased my poor family with a son. Though her anguish, and my fears, and hopes, seem divers and wild distractions from this small businesse of your papers, yet because they all narrowed themselves, and met in *Via regia*, which is the consideration of our selves, and God, I thought it time not unfit for this dispatch. Thus much more then needed I have told you, whilst my fire was lighting at Tricombs 10 a clock.

*Yours ever intirely*

J. Donne.

V 2

To

To the Honourable Knight H. G.

SIR,

**Y**OUR Son left here a Letter for me, from you. But I neither discern by it that you have received any of mine lately; which have been many, and large, and too confident to be lost, especially since, (as I remember) they always conveyed others to that good Lady; neither do I know where to finde, by any diligence, your sons lodging. But I hope he will apprehend that impossibility in me, and finde me here, where he shall also finde as much readinesse to serve him, as at *Polesworth*. This Letter of yours makes me perceive, that that Lady hath expressed her purpose to you in particular, for the next term. Accordingly, I make my promises: for since one that meant but to flatter, told an Emperour, that his benefits were to be reckoned from the day of the promise, because he never failed, it were an injury from me to the constancy of that noble Lady, if I should  
not,

not, as soon as she promises, do some act of assurance of the performance; which I have done, as I say, in fixing times to my creditors; for by the end of next terme, I will make an end with the world, by Gods grace. I lack you here, for my L. of Dorset, he might make a cheap bargain with me now, and disingage his honour, which in good faith, is a little bound, because he admitted so many witnesses of his large disposition towards me. They are preparing for a Masque of Gentlemen: in which M. Villars is, and M. Kaire, whom I told you before my L. Chamberlain had brought into the bed-chamber. I pray, if you make not so thick goings as you used, send this Letter to that good woman, for it is not only mine. If I could stay this Letter an hour, I should send you something of Savoy, for Sir Robt Rich, who is now come from Court, hath laid a commandment upon me by message to waite upon him; and I know his busines, because he never sought me, but in one kinde. But the im-  
portunity

portunity of the houre excuses me, and delivers you from further trouble from

13 Decemb.

Your very true friend and servant  
J. Donne.

To Sir H. G.

SIR,

I Love to give you advantages upon me, therefore I put my self in need of another pardon from you, by not comming to you; yet I am scarce guilty enough to spend much of your vertue from you, because I knew not of your being come till this your Letter told me so, in the midst of dinner at Peckham, this Monday. Sir, I am very truly yours; if you have overvalued me in any capacity, I will do what I can to overtake your hopes of me. I wish my self whatsoever you wish me; and so I do, whatever you wish your self. I am prisoner and close; else I had not needed this pardon, for I long much, and much more by occasion of your Letter, to see you: when you finde that good

good Lady emptiest of businesse and pleasure, present my humble thanks; you can do me no favour, which I need not, nor any, which I cannot have some hope to deserve, but this, for I have made her opinion of me, the ballance by which I weigh myself. I will come soon enough to deliver my thanks to Sir J. Harr. for your ease, whom I know I have pained with an illfavoured Letter, but my heart hath one style, and character; and is yours in wishing, and in thankfulnesse.

J. Donne.

Peckham Monday afternoon.

---

*To the Honourable Sir R. D.*

SIR,

**I** Gave no answer to the Letter I received from you upon Tuesday, both because I had in it no other commandment by it but to deliver your Letter therein, which I did, and because that Letter found me under very much sadness, which (according to the proportion of ills that fall upon me)

is:

is since allo increased, so that I had not writ-  
ten now, if I had been sure to have been  
better able to write next week, which I have  
not much appearance of: yet there was  
committed to my disposition (that is, left  
at my house in my absence) a Letter from  
Sir *W. Lover*, but it was some hours after all  
possibility of sending it by the carrier, so  
that Mr. *W. Stanhope* giving me the ho-  
nour of a visite at that time, and being in-  
stantly to depart, for your parts, did me the  
favour to undertake the delivery of it to  
you. With me, Sir, it is thus, there is not  
one person (besides my self) in my house  
well. I have already lost half a child, and  
with that mischance of hers, my wife fallen  
into an indisposition, which would afflict  
her much, but that the sicknesse of her chil-  
dren stupefies her: of one of which, in  
good faith, I have not much hope. This  
meets a fortune so ill provided for physique  
and such relief, that if God should ease us  
with burials, I know not well how to per-  
forme even that. I flatter my self in this,  
that

that I am dying too: nor can I truly dye faster, by any waste, then by losse of children. But Sir, I will mingle no more of my sadness to you, but wil a little recompense it, by telling you that my *L. Harrington*, of whom a few days since they were doubtfull, is so well recovered that now they know all his disease to be the Pox, and Measels mingled. This I heard yesterday: for I have not been there yet. I came as near importunity as I could, for an answer from Essex house, but this was all, that he should see you shortly himselfe.

*Your servant*

*J. Donne.*

*I cannot tell you so much, as you tell me, of any thing from my Lord of Som. since the Epithalamion, for I heard nothing.*

*To*



*To the Honourable Knight Sir H. Goodere.*

SIR,

I Have but one excuse for not sending you the Sermon that you do me the honour to command, and I foresee, that before I take my hand from this paper, I shall lose the benefit of that excuse; it is, that for more then twenty days, I have been travelled with a pain, in my right wrist, so like the Gout, as makes me unable to write. The writing of this Letter will implore a commentary for that, that I cannot write legibly; for that I cannot write much, this Letter will testifie against me. Sir, I beseech you, at first, tell your company, that I decline not the service out of sullenness nor laziness, nor that any fortune damps me so much, as that I am not sensible of the honour of their commanding it, but a meer inexperience whether I be able to write eight hours or no; but I will try next week, and either do it, for their service,

vice, or sink in their service. This is Thursday: and upon Tuesday my Lady Bedford came to this town: this afternoon I presented my service to her, by M<sup>ris</sup> *Withrington*: and so asked leave to have waited upon them at supper: but my messenger found them ready to go into their Coach: so that a third Letter which I received from M<sup>ris</sup> *Dadley*, referring me to M<sup>ris</sup> *Withringtons* relation of all that State, I lose it till their return to this town. To clear you in that wherein I see by your Letter that I had not well expressed my self in mine, Sir *Ed. Herbert* writ to Sir *Ed. Sackvil*, not to presse the King to fix any certain time of sending him, till he was come over, and had spoken with the King: Sir *Ed. Sackvil* collects upon that, that Sir *Ed. H.* meanes to go again; I think it is only, that he would have his honour so saved, as not to seem to be recalled, by having a successor, before he had emptied the place. We hear nothing from my Lord of *Doncaster*; nor have we any way to send to him. I have not seen  
X 2 my

my Lady *Doncaster*, for she crost to *Penhurst*, and from thence to *Petworth*, my Lady *Isabella* came to this Town; where, before her comming, a Letter attended her from my Lady of *Tichfield*: and thither she went, with their servants, who staid her comming. Hither came lately Letters with goodspeed from *Vienna*, in which there is no mention of any such defeat, as in rumour C. *Mansfeld* hath been said to have given to the D. of *Bavyer*: but their forces were then within such distance, as may have procured something before this time. Those which watched advantages in the Court of the Emperour, have made that use of C. *Mansfelds* proceedings, as that my Lord *Digby* complains, that thereby, the forwardnesse in which his negotiation was, is somewhat retarded. He proceeds from thence into *Spain*. The D. of *Bavyer* hath presented the Emperour an account of 1200<sup>m</sup> l. sterling in that warre, to be reimbursed: and finding the Palatinate to be in treaty, hath required a great part of *Austria* for his security,

security, and they say, it is so transacted; which is a good signe of a possibility in the restitution of the Palatinate. For any thing I discern, their fears are much greater from *Hungary*, then from *Bohemia*; and the losse of Canon, in a great proportion, and other things, at the death of *Bucquoy*, was much greater, then they suffered to be published. We here *Spinola* is passed over at *Rhenebery*; if it be so, they are no longer distracted, whether he would bend upon *Juliers*, or the Palatinate. I know not what you hear from your noble son-in-law, who sees those things clearly in himself, and in a near distance; but I hear here, that the King hath much lost the affection of the English in those parts. Whether it proceed from any sowrenesse in him, or that they be otherwise taken off, from applying themselves to him, I know not. My Lord of *S. Albons* hath found so much favour as that a pension of 2000 *l.* will be given him; he desires that he might have it for years, that so he might transferre it upon his creditors,

ditors; or that in place of it he might have 8000 l. for he hath found a disposition in his creditors (to whom I hear he hath paid 3000 l. since by retyring) to accept 8000 l. for all his debts, which are three times as much. I have been some times with my L. of *Canterbury*, since by accident, to give you his own words. I see him retain his former cheerfulnesse here and at *Croydon*, but I do not hear from Court, that he hath any ground for such a confidence, but that his case may need favour, and not have it. That place, and *Bedington*, and *Chelsey*, and *Highbury*, where that very good man my Lord *Hobard* is, and *Hackney*, with the M. of the Rolls, and my familiar *Peckham*, are my circumference. No place so eccentricque to me, as that I lye just at *London*; and with those fragmentary recreations I must make shift to recompense the missing of that contentment which your favour opens to me, and my desire provokes me to, the kissing of your hands at *Polesworth*. My daughter *Constance* is at this time with me;  
for

for the emptinesse of the town, hath made me, who otherwise live upon the almes of others, a houskeeper, for a moneth; and so she is my servant below stairs, and my companion above: she was at the table with me, when your Letter was brought, and I pay her a piece of her petition in doing her this office, to present her service to my Lady *Netherfoles*, and her very good sister. But that she is gone to bed two hours before I writ this, she should have signed, with such a hand as your daughter *Mary* did to me, that which I testifie for her, that she is as affectionate a servant to them all, as their goodnesse hath created any where. Sir, I shall recompense my tediousnesse, in closing mine eyes with a prayer for yours, as for mine own happinesse, for I am almost in bed; if it were my last bed, and I upon my last businesse there, I should not omit to joyn you with

*Your very humble and very thankfull  
servant in Christ Jesus*

Aug. 30. 1611.

J. Donne.

To

*To his honourable friend S<sup>r</sup> H. G.*

SIR,

**T**O you that are not easily scandalized, and in whom, I hope, neither my Religion nor Morality can suffer, I dare write my opinion of that Book in whose bowels you left me. It hath refreshed, and given new justice to my ordinary complaint, That the Divines of these times, are become meer Advocates, as though Religion were a temporall inheritance; they plead for it with all sophistications, and illusions, and forgeries: And herein are they likest Advocates, that though they be feed by the way, with Dignities, and other recompenses, yet that for which they plead is none of theirs. They write for Religion, without it. In the main point in question, I think truly there is a perplexity (as farre as I see yet) and both sides may be in justice, and innocence; and the wounds which they inflict upon the adverse part, are all *se defendendo*: for, clearly, our State cannot be  
safe



safe without the Oath; since they professe, that Clergie-men, though Traitors, are no Subjects, and that all the rest may be none to morrow. And, as clearly, the Supremacy which the Ro. Church pretend, were diminished, if it were limited; and will as ill abide that, or disputation, as the Prerogative of temporall Kings, who being the onely judges of their prerogative, why may not Roman Bishops, (so enlightned as they are presumed by them) be good witnesses of their own supremacie, which is now so much impugned? But for this particular Author, I looked for more prudence, and humane wisdom in him, in avoiding all miscitings, or mis-interpretings, because at this time, the watch is set, and every bodys hammer is upon that anvill; and to dare offend in that kinde now, is, for a thief to leave the covert, and meet a strong hue and cry in the teeth: and yet truly this man is extremely obnoxious in that kinde; for, though he have answered many things fully, (as no book ever gave more advantage

Y

then

then that which he undertook) and abound in delicate applications, and ornaments, from the divine and prophane authors, yet being chiefly conversant about two points, he prevaricates in both. For, for the matter, which is the first, he referres it intirely, and namely, to that which D. Morter hath said therein before, and so leaves it roundly: And for the person (which is the second) upon whom he amasses as many opprobries, as any other could deserve, he pronounceth, that he will account any answer from his adversary, slander, except he do (as he hath done) draw whatsoever he saith of him, from Authors of the same Religion, and in print: And so, he having made use of all the Quodlibetaries, imputations against the other, cannot be obnoxious himself in that kinde, and so hath provided safely. It were no service to you, to send you my notes upon the Book, because they are sandy, and incoherent ragges, for my memory, not for your judgement; and to extend them to an easinesse, and perspicuity,

cuity, would make them a Pamphlet, not a Letter. I will therefore deferre them till I see you; and in the mean time, I will adventure to say to you, without inserting one unnecessary word, that the Book is full of falsifications in words, and in sense, and of falshoods in matter of fact, and of inconsequent and unscholarlike arguings, and of relinquishing the King, in many points of defence, and of contradiction of himself, and of dangerous and suspected Doctrine in Divinitie, and of silly ridiculous triflings, and of extreme flatteries, and of neglecting better and more obvious answers, and of letting slip some enormous advantages which the other gave, and he spies not. I know (as I begun) I speak to you who cannot be scandalized, and that neither measure Religion (as it is now called) by Unitie, nor suspect Unity, for these interruptions. Sir, not onely a Mathematique point, which is the most indivisible and unique thing which art can present, flowes into every line which is derived from the Cen-

ter, but our soul which is but one, hath swallowed up a Negative, and feeling soul, which was in the body before it came, and exercises those faculties yet; and God himselfe, who only is one, seems to have been eternally delighted, with a disunion of persons. They whose active function it is, must endeavour this unity in Religion: and and we at our lay Altars (which are our tables, or bedside, or stools, wheresoever we dare prostrate our selves to God in prayer) must beg it of him: but we must take heed of making misconclusions upon the want of it: for, whether the Maior and Aldermen fall out, (as with us and the Puritans; Bishops against Priests) or the Commoners voyces differ who is Maior, and who Aldermen, or what their Jurisdiction, (as with the Bishop of Rome, or whosoever) yet it is still one Corporation.

Micham, Thurs-  
day late.

*Your very affectionate servant and  
lover* J. Donne.

*Never leave the remembrance of my poor service unmentioned when you see the good Lady.*

To S<sup>r</sup> T.H.

S<sup>r</sup> I.R.

**T**His evening, which is 5<sup>o</sup> *October*, I finde your Letter of *Michaelmas* day, and though I see by it, that it is a return of a Letter, not of the last weeks, and there-upon make account, that my last weeks Letter hath satisfied you in some things which this Letter commands, concerning *Pauls*, yet for other things I would give you a drowsie relation, for it is that time of night, though I called it evening. At the Kings going from hence, upon *Munday* last, we made account to have seen Sir *John Sutclin* Secretary, and Sir *Rob. Weston* Chancellor of the Exchequer, but they are not done, but both are fixed: my L. *Cranfield* received his staffe, with these two suits obtained from the King, That all Assignations might be transferred into the Exchequer, and so no paiments charged upon the Customes, nor Receivers, nor the Court of Wards, &c. And that for a time there might be a damp-

Y 3,

cast.

cast upon Pensions, till they might be considered. In the Low Countries the Armies stirre not. In the Palatinate Sir H. Vere attempting the regaining of *Stenie* Castle, was surpris'd with the Enemy in so much strength, that they write it over for a Master-piece, that he was able to make a retreat to *Manhome*: so that now the Enemy is got on that side the River which *Heydelberg* is on, and I know nothing that can stand in his way. My L. *Digby* comes from *Vienna*, before he goes into *Spain*, by Count *Mansfield*, by the Palatinate, by *Paris*; and therefore upon his comming, I shall be able to say something to you. In Sir *John Sutcliff* I presume you see an end of Sir *Ro. Naunton*, and we see an end of Mr *Tho. Murray* too; I beleeve he comes no more to the Prince. For the triall of my L. of *Canterburys* irregularity, there is a Commission to fixe Bishops, *London*, *Winchester*, *Rocheſter*, and three onely elect, *Lincoln*, *S. Davids*, and *Exeter*: two Judges, *L. Hobard*, and *Dodridge*; two Civillians, Sir *H. Martin*, and *D. Steward*. The

con-

consecration of these elect Bishops, and consequently, my being Dean, must attend the issue of this Commission. Sir *Th. Roe* is gone. The Proclamations of putting off the Parliament, till *February*, are like to outrun this Letter. It is very late; and it is one act, to say Grace after Supper, and to commend my self into the hands of my blessed Saviour, in my bed, and so close this Letter, and mine eies, with the same blessing upon all your family. Amen.

*Your poor servant in Chr. Jes.*  
J. Donne.

---

*To Sir H. G.*

SIR,

I Receive this 14 your Letter of the 10. yet I am not come to an understanding how these Carriers keep daies: for I would faine think that the Letters which I sent up on *Thursday* last might have given you such an account of the state of my family, that you needed not have asked by this. But  
Sir,



Sir, it hath pleased God to adde thus much to my affliction, that my wife hath now confessed her self to be extremely sick; she hath held out thus long to assist me, but is now overturn'd, & here we be in two beds, or graves; so that God hath marked out a great many of us, but taken none yet. I have passed ten daies without taking any thing; so that I think no man can live more thriftily. I have purged and vexed my body much since I writ to you, and this day I have missed my fit: and this is the first time, that I could discern any intermission. This is enough, the rest I will spend upon the parts of your Letter: Your Letter at *Pauls* is delivered. In the History of that remove, this onely perchance may be news to you, that Mr *Alabaster* hath got of the King the Deans best Living worth above 300<sup>l</sup>, which the Dean had good hope to have held a while. Of that which you writ concerning a Book of the Nullity, I have heard no syllable any other way. If you have received it by good hands, I beleieve it  
with

with you : otherwise the report is naturally very incredible. Though the answering of it be a work for some, both of better abilities really, and in common reputation also, yet I was like enough to have had some knowledge thereof. You mention again some thing which it seems you are not willing I should understand of my Lady *Huntington*: some of your former Letters, have spoken of some other former Letters, (which I never saw) which speak of the matter as of a history and thing done; and these later Letters speak of it Prophetically, as of a future contingent. I am glad the often remembrance of it, gives me often occasion of thankfulness to her, for retaining me in her memory, and of professing my self in my end, and ways, her most humble servant. For your Parliament businesse, I should be very sorry, if you came not up, because I presume you had seposd many businesse, to have been done at that time; but in the ways wherein you have gone, I protest I am diffident. For first, for that L.

and so

Z

whom

whom you solicited by Letters through me, I tell you with the whispering of a secret, but the confidence of a friend, that you will be deceived whensoever you think that he should take any delight in doing you a courtesie. And I am afraid, the true heartinesse of the other noble Gentleman *M. Howard*, will be of small use in this particular, if he have but solicited my L. his father to reserve a blanke for his friend, for my L. hath suffered more denials, even in places where he sent names, then could have been feared. Besides *M. How.* hath not written to his father therein, but to *M. Woodward*, who perceiving those Letters to be written, before his purpose of being Knight for the Shire, thinkes these Letters extinguished. You made me offer so long since of a place (it was when you writ into the west) yet I could think it no merite to have offered you one since, otherwise it hath been since in my power, for since the *M.* of the Rolls provided me one, *Sir Ed. Herbert*, who makes haste away, made me a  
modv N present

presend of his, and I have had a third of  
for the businesse of your last weeks Letter  
concerning the widow, is not a subject  
for a feverous mans consideration. There-  
fore I only send you back those Letters  
which you sent; and aske you leave to  
make this which I am fain to call my good  
day, so much truly good, as to spend the  
rest of it with Dr. Layfield, who is, upon  
my summons, at this hour come to me. My  
Physicians have made me afraid, that this  
disease will work into my head, and so put  
me into lightnesses, therefore I am desi-  
rous that I be understood before any  
such danger overtake me.

14. March.

*Your true poor. servant*  
J. Donne.*To the Honourable Knight Sir H. G.*

SIR,

**A**FTER I have told you, that the Lady  
Hay dyed last Tuesday, and that to her  
end she was anguished with the memory

Z

of the execution of that fellow which attempted her in the coach. I have told you all which hath fallen out here. Except between you and me that may be worth the telling, that my L. Chancellor gave me so noble and so ready a dispatch; accompanied with so fatherly advise, and remorse for my fortunes, that I am now, like an Alchymist, delighted with discoveries by the way, though I attain not mine end. It spent me so little time after your going, that, although you speak in your Letter of good dispatch in your going, yet I might have overtaken you. And though perchance if I had gone, it might have been inconvenient for me, to have put my self into my L. Chamberlains presence, if that sicknesse be earnest at *Ashby*, and so I should nothing have advanced my businesse, yet I should have come to that noble Lady with better confidence, and more assurance of a pardon, when I had brought a conscience, that I came despoiled of all other respects, only to kisse her hands, in whose protection I am, since I have, nor desire other station, then a place in her good opinion.

opinion. I took so good contentment in the fashion which my L. Chancellor used towards me, that out of a voluptuous loathness to let that taste go out of my mouth, I forbear to make any further tryall in that businesse till the King come into these quarters. So that, Sir, I am here in place to serve you, if either I be capable of your commandements, or this town give any thing worth the writing. As often as you see your noble friend, and her good sister, allow my name a room in your discourse, it is a short one, and you will soon have done. But tell them not my desire to do them service, for then you engage your self in a longer discourse, then I am worthy. Only in pursuit of your commandment I sent the Paquet to the Post, for in mine own understanding, there should appear small hope of arriving by that way, except you know otherwise that the LL mean to make some stay in their return, in those parts: but the Letter is brought back again, for the Post went away yesterday, and they

they knew of no occasion of sending till next week. Therefore except I can inform my self of some good means, I will retain it, till I have a fresh commandment from you. I see M: Taverner still in this town, the Lady Carey went from hence but yesterday. I am in some perplexity what to doe with this packet, till some good fortune, or your Letters clear me.

Aug. 19.

Your humble servant  
J. Donne.

To Sir H. Goodere at Polesworth.

SIR,

IT is true that M. Gherard told you, I had that commandment from the King signified to me by my L. and am still under it, and we are within fourteen days of our time for going. I leave a scattered flock of wretched children, and I carry an infirme and valetudinary body, and I goe into the mouth of such adversaries, as I cannot blame for hating me, the Jesuits, and yet I  
go.



go. Though this be no service to my Lord:  
yet I shall never come nearer doing him a  
service, nor do any thing liker a service then  
this. Yesterday we had news by Sir *Nowell*  
*Carou*, from *Paris*, that the D. of *Savoy* was  
elected King of *Bohemia*; which would cut  
off a great part of the occasion of our going:  
but it is not much credible in it self, nor at  
all beleevd here, because it is not signified  
from *Savoy*, nor *Heidelberg*. Since M. *Gher.*  
continues your Gazittier, I need tell you no-  
thing of the Q. of *Frances* estate. For your  
commandment in memory of M. *Marth*,  
I should not have sate so many procellas, if  
I could incline my thoughts that way. It is  
not lazinesse, it is not gravity, nor coldnesse  
towards his memory, or your service; for I  
have thought of it oftner, and longer, then  
I was wont to do in such things, and no-  
thing is done. Your last pacquet, in which  
your daughter and I were joynt commissi-  
oners, was brought to me, because she was  
at *Hampton*, with the *Queens* body: but I sent  
her part to her, and my *La. H. redalls* to her,  
who

who presents her service to you by me now, and says she will write next week, and so will I too, by Gods grace. You forget me absolutely and intirely, whensoever you forget me to that noble Countesse. God bleſſe you in all, *Amen.*

9 Martii.

*Your true servant in J<sup>e</sup>s. Chr.*  
J. Donne.

*To the best Knight Sir H. G.*

SIR,

**A**T your conveniency, I pray send my Lady *Bedford* this inclosed, but be pleased to put your self to some inconvenience, (if it be so) to kisse my Lady *Ruthins* hands in my name, and to present my very humble service to her, and tell her, that no ill conscience of having deserved her, but only an obedience to her commandments, keeps me from saying to her self thus much; that this day I received a letter from my *L. of Kent*, written yesterday at *Wrest*: in that his Lordships sends me word, that  
that

that favour which he hath formerly done me, in giving me *Blouham*, is now likely to fall upon me, because the Incumbent is dangerously ill: and because this is the season in which he removes from *Wrest* thither, he desires (for I give you his own word) that he may be accommodated there, (if it fall now) as heretofore. Out of my absolute and intire readiness to serve that family, I sent back his messenger with this answer, that I esteemed it a great part of my good fortune, that I should become worthy to be commanded by him. If my Lady will be pleased to direct me in what particular manner I may best serve her purposes, I shall gladly waite upon her at any time, to receive her command with as much devotion and thankfulnesse as I received the benefit. I beseech you make her beleieve it, as in any place you beleieve

26 Febr. 1621.

Your poor servant in Chr. Jes.  
J. Donne.

To

*To my best of friends Sir H. G.*

SIR,

I Heard not from you this week; therefore I write more willingly, because it hath in it so much more merit. And I might do it very cheaply, since to convey to you this Letter, which mine hath the honour to bring, any little Letter would serve, and be acceptable for that. Because it came not last week, I went now to sollicite it, and she sent it me next day with some thanks, and some excuse that she knew not me, when I was with her. You know, I do not easily put my self into those hazards, nor do much brag of my valor now, otherwise then I purposed it for a service to you. The newest thing that I know in the world, is my new son: whose mothers being well takes off from me any new waight upon my fortune. I hear in Newgate, that M. Matthew is dead. The Catholiques beleeve it there: perchance out of a custome of credulity. But thereport, is close prisoner; for

I

I never met it abroad. This is my third letter, all which I sent by *Spelty* whom my boy found at *Abington* house. I have now two of the best happineses which could befall me, upon me; which are, to be a widower and my wife alive, which may make you know, that it is but for your ease, that this letter is no longer, in this leasure in which (having nothing else to write) I might vary a thousand ways that I am

Monday at night.

Your very affectionate servant  
J. Donne.

---

*To my worthy friend G. K.*

SIR,

I Receive this heare that I begin this return, your Letter by a servant of Sir G. *Greseley*, by whom also I hasten this dispatch. This needs no enlargement since it hath the honour to convey one from M. *Gherard*. But though by telling me, it was a bold letter, I had leave to open it, and that I have a little itch to make some animad-

versions & Criticismes upon it (as that there is a ciphar too much in the sum of the Kings debts, and such like) yet since my eyes do easily fall back to their distemper, and that I am this night to sup at Sir *Ar. Ingrams*, I had rather forfeit their little strength at his supper, then with writing such impertinencies: the best spending them, is upon the rest of your Letter, to which, Sir, I can only say in generall, that some appearances have been here, of some treatise concerning this Nullity, which are said to proceed from *Geneva*, but are beleev'd to have been done within doors, by encouragements of some whose names I will not commit to this letter. My poor study having lyen that way, it may prove possible, that my weak assistance may be of use in this matter, in a more serious fashion, then an Epithalamion. This made me therefore abstinent in that kinde; yet by my troth, I think I shall not scape. I deprehend in my self more then an alacrity, a vehemency to do service to that company; and

so

so, I may finde reason to make rime. If it be done, I see not how I can admit that circuit of sending them to you, to be sent hither; that seems a kinde of praying to Saints, to whom God must tell first, that such a man prays to them to pray to him. So that I shall lose the honour of that conveyance; but, for recompense, you shall scape the danger of approving it. My next Letter shall say more of this. This shall end with delivering you the remembrance of my Lady Bartlet, who is present at the sealing hereof.

*Your very true and affectionate servant*

Jan. 19.

J. Donne.

*Which name when there is any empty corner in your discourse with that noble Lady at Ashby, I humbly beseech you to present to her as one more devoted to her service then perchance you will say.*



*To Sir G. B.*

SIR,

**B**etween the time of making up my other Letters, and the hour that your man limited me to call for them, came to my house an other packet directed to him: for by this time, the carrier is as wise, as his horse, to go to the house that he hath used to go. I found liberty in the superscription to open, and so I did; but for that part which concerns him, I must attend his coming hither, for I know not where to seek him; and besides, I have enough to say for that part which concerns my self. Sir, even in the Letter it self to me, I deprehend much inclination, to chide me: and it is but out of your habit of good language that you spare me. So little occasion as that postscript of mine, could not bring you so near to it, if nothing else were mistaken, which (so God help me) was so little, that I remember not what it was, and I would no more hear again what I write in an officious

officious Letter, then what I said at a drunken supper. I had no purpose to exercise your diligence in presenting my name to that Lady, but either I did, or should have said, that I writ onely to fill up any empty corner in your discourse. So, Sir, the reading of the Letter, was a kinde of travell to me, but when I came to the paper inclosed, I was brought to bed of a monster. To expresse my self vehemently quickly, I must say, that I can scarce think, that you have read M. *Gherards* letter rightly, therefore I send you back your own again. I will not protest against my being such a knave, for no man shall have that from me, if he expect it: but I will protest against my being such a fool, as to depose any thing in him with hope of locking it up, and against that lownesse, of seeking reputation by so poor a way. I am not so forry, that I am a narrow man, as that for all the narrownesse, you have not seen through me yet, nor known me perfectly; for I might think by this, (if I had not other testimony) that I have been  
little

little in your contemplation. Sixteen letters from M. *Gherard*, could not ( I think ) perswade a *Middlesex* Jury of so much dishonesty in

*Your true servant*

J. Donne.

*To the Honourable Knight Sir G. P.*

*S I R,*

I Would have intermitted this week without writing, if I had not found the name of my Lady *Huntington* in your Letter. The devotion which I owe, and ( in good faith ) pay in my best prayers for her good, in all kinde awakens me to present my humble thanks for this, that her Ladiship retains my name in her memory: she never laid obligation upon any man, readier to expresse his acknowledgement of them, to any servant of her servants; I am bound to say much of this, for your indemnity; because though I had a little preparation to her knowledge in the house where I served  
at

at first, yet, I think, she took her characters of me, from you: And, at what time soever she thought best of me in her life, I am better then that, for my goodnesse is my thankfulnesse, and I am every day fuller of that then before, to her La<sup>p</sup>. I say nothing to you of forein names in this Letter, because your son Sir *Francis* is here. For that which you write concerning your son, I onely gave my man *Martin* in charge, to use his interest in the Keeper, that your son should fall under no wants there, which it seems your son discharged, for I hear not of them. For other trifles, I bad my man let him have whatsoever he asked, so, as it might seem to come from him, and not me; and laying that look upon it, it came to almost nothing. Tell both your daughters a peece of a storie of my *Con*. which may accustome them to endure disappointments in this world: An honourable person (whose name I give you in a schedule to burn, lest this Letter should be mis-laid) had an intention to give her one of his sons,

B b

and

and had told it me, and would have been content to accept what I, by my friends, could have begged for her; but he intended that son to my Profession, and had provided him already 300<sup>l</sup> a year, of his own gift in Church livings, and hath estated 300<sup>l</sup> more of inheritance for their children: and now the youth, (who yet knows nothing of his fathers intention nor mine) flies from his resolutions for that Calling, and importunes his Father to let him travell. The girl knows not her losse, for I never told her of it: but truly, it is a great disappointment to me. More then these, Sir, we must all suffer, in our way to heaven, where, I hope you and all yours shall meet.

*Your poore friend, and affectionate servant*  
J. Donne.

180808.

may account me to have done this  
ments in this world: An honour  
to him, (whose name I give you in a schedule  
to him, for his love should be mil-laid)  
and an intention to give her one of his sons,

and

Bp

To my much honoured friend S<sup>r</sup> T. Lucy.

SIR,

I Have scarce had at any time any thing so like news to write to you, as that I am at this Town; we came from *Spâ* with so much resolution of passing by *Holland*. But at *Mastricht* we found that the lownesse, and slacknesse of the River, would incommode us so much, as we charged our whole gests, and came hither by Land. In the way at *Lovaine* we met the E. of *Aronde*, to recompense the losse wee had of missing my L. *Chandis* and his company, who came to *Spâ* within a few hours after we came away. Sir *Ed. Conaway*, by occasion of his bodies indisposition, was gone home before: he told me he had some hope of you about *Bartholomewtide*: But because I half understood by a Letter from you, that you were determin'd upon the Countrie till *Michaelmas*, I am not so earnest in endeavouring to prolong our stay in these parts, as otherwise I should. If I could joine with

him in that hope of seeing you on this side the water ; and if you should hold that purpose of comming at that time, I should repent extremely my laying of our journies ; for (if we should by miracle hold any resolution) we should be in *England* about that time, so that I might misse you both here, and there. Sir, our greatest businesse is more in our power then the least, and we may be surer to meet in heaven then in any place upon earth ; and whilst we are distant here, we may meet as often as we list in Gods presence, by soliciting in our prayers for one another. I received 4 Letters from you at *Spâ* by long circuits. In the last, one from my *L. Dorset* : I, who had a conscience of mine own unworthinesse of any favour from him, could not chuse but present my thanks for the least. I do not therefore repent my forwardnesse in that office, and I beseech you not to repent your part therein. Since we came to this Town, there arrived an Extraordinary from *Spain*, with a reconfirmation of the *D. d' Aumals* Pension, which



is thereby 2400<sup>l</sup> a year, & he brings the title of Count, to *Rodrigo de Calderon*, who from a very low place, having grown to be Secretary to *Lerma*, is now Ambassador here, and in great opinion of wisdom: They say yet he goes to *Prague* with the Marquis *Spinola*, and the G. *Buquoy*, to congratulate the Emperour: but we all conclude here, that persons of such quality, being great in matter of Warre, are not sent for so small an employment: we beleeve certainly, that they deliberate a Warre, and that the reduction of *Aix* being not worthy this diligence, their intentions must be upon *Cleve*, for the new Town which the two Princes make by *Collen*, despites them much. The Elector of *Ments* hath lately been here, upon pretence of comming in devotion to *Sichem*, and shortly the Electors of *Colein* and *Saxony* are to be here severally: all concurs to a disposition of such a Warre, and the *Landgrave* of *Hasse* (who is as yet in the Union) is much solicited and caressed by this party, and I doubt, will prove a frail

and corruptible man. I durst think confidently, that they will at least proceed so far towards a Warre, as to try how *France* will dispose it self in the businesse: for it is conceived that the D. of *Bovillon* brought to our K. good assurances from the Qu. Regent, that she would pursue all her husbands purposes in advancing the designs of those Princes who are in possession of *Cleve*, and in the Union. If she declare herself to do so, when they stirre, they are like to divert their purposes; but if she stand but neutrall (as it is likely, considering how Spanish the Court is at this time) I see not that the Princes of the Union are much likely to retard them. Sir, you see what unconcerning things I am faine to write of, lest I should write of my self, who am so little a history or tale, that I should not hold out to make a Letter long enough to send over a Sea to you; for I should dispatch my self in this one word that I am

Aug. 16. here.  
1622.

Your affectionate servant and lover  
J. Donne.

To

*To the honourable Knight Sir H. G.*

SIR,

Since I received a Letter by your sonne, whom I have not yet had the honour to see, I had a Letter Pacquet from you by M<sup>r</sup> Roe: To the former, I writ before: In this I have no other commandement from you, but to tell you, whether M<sup>r</sup> Villers have received from the K, any additions of honour, or profit. Without doubt he hath yet none. He is here, practising for the Mask; of which, if I mis-remember not, I writ as much as you desire to know, in a Letter which seems not, to have been come to you, when you writ. In the Savoy business, the King hath declared himself by an engagement, to assist him with 100000<sup>l</sup> a year, if the Warre continue. But I beleieve, he must farm out your *Warwickshire* Benevolence for the payment thereof. Upon the strength of this engagement, Sir Rob. Rich becomes confident in his hopes. If you stood in an equall disposition for the West, and

and onely forbore, by reason of M<sup>r</sup> *Martins* silence, I wonder; for I think, I told you, that he was gone; and I saw in Sir *Tho. Lucies* hand, a Letter from him to you, which was likely to tell you as much. Since I came from Court, I have stirred very little: Now that the Court comes again to us, I may have something which you may be content to receive from

18 Decemb.

*Your very affectionate servant*  
J. Donne.

*To my good friend S<sup>r</sup> H.G.*

SIR,  
**T**HE Messenger who brought me your Letter presented me a just excuse, for I received them so late upon *Thursday* night, that I should have dispatched before I could begin; yet I have obeyed you drowsily, and coldly, as the night and my indisposition commanded: yet perchance those hinderances have done good, for so your Letters are the lesse curious, in which,  
men

men of much leasure may soon exceed, when they write of businesse, they having but a little. You mention two more letters then I send. The time was not too short for me to have written them, ( for I had an whole night ) but it was too short to work a beleefe in me, that you could think it fit to go two so divers ways to one end. I see not, ( for I see not the reason ) how those letters could well have concurred with these, nor how those would well have been drawn from them, in a businesse wholly relating to this house. I was not lazie in disobeying you, but ( I thought ) only thrifty, and your request of those was not absolute, but conditioned, if I had leasure. So though that condition hinder them not, since another doth ( and you forethought, that one might ) I am not stubborn. The good Countesse spake somewhat of your desire of letters, but I am afraid, she is not a proper Mediatrix to those persons, but I counsaile in the dark. And therefore return to that, of which I have clear light, that I am

always glad, when I have any way to expresse my love; for in these commandments you feed my desires, and you give me means to pay some of my debts to you: the interest of which I pay in all my prayers for you, which, if it please not God to shew here, I hope we shall finde again together in heaven, whither they were sent. I came this morning to say thus much, and because the Porter which came to Micham summoned me for this hour to London: from whence I am this minute returning to end a little course of Physick.

Friday 8 in the morning.

*Yours very truly*  
J. Donne.

*To Sir H. G.*

*SIR,*

I Writ to you yesterday taking the boldnesse to put a letter into the good Ladies packet for you. This morning I had this new occasion of writing, that Sir Tho. Roe, who brought this inclosed Letter to me, and

and left it unsealed, intreated me to take the first opportunity of sending it. Besides that which is in that letter (for he read it to me) I came to the knowledg in *Yorkhouse* that my L. Chancellor hath been moved, and incensed against you, and asking Sir *Tho. Roe*, if he were directly or occasionally any cause of that, he tells me thus much, that Sir *W. Lover*, and Sir *H. Carey*, have obtained of my L. to have a Pursevant, and consequently a Serjeant sent into the Countrey for you. My L. grounds this earnestnesse against you, upon some refusing to appear upon proceffe which hath been taken out against you. And I perceive Sir *Ed. Eston*, and both the other, admit consultations, of ways by petition to the King, or Counsaile, or L. Chamberlain, or any other. The great danger, obliquely likely to fall, is that when it comes to light, how you stand towards *M. Mathew*, you may lose the ease which you have by colour of that extent, and he may lose the benefit, of having had so much of his estate concealed. You will therefore



at least pardon my advising you, to place those sums, which by your retiring I presume you do imploy upon payment of debts, in such places as that these particular friends be not forced to leave being so. I confesse, the going about to pay debts, hastens importunity. I finde in my self, that where I was not asked money before, yet when I offered to pay next Terme, they seem loth to afford me that time, which might justly have been desperate before: but that which you told me out of the Countrey, with the assistance which I hope to finde here, (especially if your endeavour may advance it at *Darset* house) I hope will inable me to escape clamor, and an ill conscience, in that behalf. One thing more I must tell you; but so softly, that I am loath to hear my self: and so softly, that if that good Lady were in the room, with you and this Letter, she might not hear. It is, that I am brought to a necessity of printing my Poems, and addressing them to my L. Chamberlain. This I mean to do forth-

forthwith; not for much publique view, but at mine own cost, a few Copies. I apprehend some incongruities in the resolution; and I know what I shall suffer from many interpretations: but I am at an end, of much considering that; and, if I were as startling in that kinde, as ever I was, yet in this particular, I am under an unescapable necessity, as I shall let you perceive, when I see you. By this occasion I am made a Rhapsoder of mine own rags, and that cost me more diligence, to seek them, then it did to make them. This made me aske to borrow that old book of you, which it will be too late to see, for that use, when I see you: for I must do this, as a valediction to the world, before I take Orders. But this is it, I am to aske you; whether you ever made any such use of the letter in verse, *A nostre Countesse chez vous*, as that I may not put it in, amongst the rest to persons of that rank; for I desire very very much, that something should bear her name in the book, and I would be just to my written

words to my L<sup>d</sup> Harrington, to write nothing after that. I pray tell me as soon as you can, if I be at liberty to insert that: for if you have by any occasion applied any pieces of it, I see not, that it will be discerned, when it appears in the whole piece. Though this be a little matter, I would be sorry not to have an account of it, within as little after Newyears tide, as you could. I have something else to say, of M. Villars, but because I hope to see you here shortly, and because new additions, to the truths or rumours, which concern him, are likely to be made by occasion of this Masque, I forbear to send you the edition of this Mart, since I know it will be augmented by the next: of which, if you prevent it not by coming, you shall have, by letter an account from

*Vigilia S<sup>t</sup>. Tho.*  
1614.

Your very affectionate  
friend and servant

J. Donne.

*To the worthy Knight Sir Tho. Lucy.*

SIR,

**Y**OUR Letter comes to me, at Grace after supper; it is part of the prayer of that Grace, that God will blesse you, and all yours with his best blessings of both kinde. I would write you news; but your love to me, may make you apt to over-beleeve news for my sake. And truly all things that are upon the stage of the world now, are full of such uncertanities, as may justly make any man loth to passe a conjecture upon them; not only because it is hard to see how they wil end, but because it is misinterable and dangerous to conjecture otherwise, then some men would have the event to be. That which is especially in my contemplation, which is the issue of my L. of *Canterbaries* businesse, (for thereupon depends the consecration of my predecessor, upon which the Deanery devolves to the King) is no farther proceeded in yet, then that some of the 10 Commissioners have

met

met once; and upon Saterday next there will be a fuller meeting, and an entrance into the businesse, upon which, much, very much in consequence, depends. Of my L. of *Donc.* we are only assured, that he is in a good way of convalescence; but of any audience nothing yet. Slacken not your hold of my L. Treasurer, for I have been told that you are in his care. I send you a Copy of that Sermon, but it is not my copy, which I thought my L. of *South-hampton* would have sent me backe. This you must be pleased to let me have again, for I borrow it: for the other, I will pretermitt no time to write it; though in good faith, I have half forgot it. If in any letter I leave out the name of the L<sup>a</sup>. *Hunt.* or L<sup>a</sup>. *Burdell*, or your daughters, tell them, that I named them. I take the falshood upon me, for I intend it very really, and very humbly, where I am good for any thing in any of their services. Our blessed Saviour continue and enlarge his blessings to you all, *Amen.*

*Your humble servant in Chr. J<sup>es</sup>.*  
 11 Octob. 1621. J. Donne.

*Why do you say nothing of, my little book of Cases. To*

*To Sir G.B.*

S I R,

**I**T is one of my blinde Meditations to think what a miserable defeat it would be to all these preparations of braverie, if my infirmity should overtake others: for, I am at least half blinde, my windows are all as full of glasses of Waters, as any Mountebanks stall. This messenger makes haste, I thank him for it; therefore I onely send you this Letter, which was sent to me about three daies past, and my promise to distribute your other Letters, according to your addresses, as fast as my Monsieur can doe it; for, for any personall service, you must be content, at this time, to pardon

Decemb. 23.

*Your affectionate servant*  
J. Donne.DdTo

To Sir H. Goodere.

SIR,

**A** Greeably to my fortune, and thoughts, I was crawld this back way from *Key-  
ston*; through my broken casement at *Bed-  
ford*, I saw, for my best dish at dinner, your  
Coach: I studied your gestic, but when I  
knew where you were, I went out of this  
Town, in a doubt whether I should turn in  
to *Wrest*; and you know the wisdom of  
the Parliament is, to resolve ever in the Ne-  
gative: Therefore it is likeliest I shall not  
come in there; yet, let me give you in pas-  
sing, thus much account of my self: I  
thought to kisse my *L. Spencers* hands, at one  
house, and have passed three. If you know  
nothing to the contrary, risen since I came  
from *London*, I am likely to have a room in  
my *L. of Dor.* train, into the Countrey; if I  
have, I do not ask, but use the leave of wai-  
ting upon you at home: There and ever  
elsewhere, our blessed Saviour blesse you,  
and



and all yours, in which number, I pray, account ever

*Your very thankfull servant in Chr. Jes.*  
J. Donne.

---

*To Sir H. G.*

*S I R,*

I Cannot obey you, if you go to morrow to *Parsons-green*, your company, that place, and my promise are strong inducements, but an Ague flouts them all, of which I have had two such threatnings, that I provide against it by a little Physick. This is one fetter; but I have a pair: for I attend *Sir Geo. Mores* answer in a little businesse, of which I can have no account till his return, so I am fastned here, till after *Sunday*. As you are sure that I love you thorowly, so think this a good expressing of that, that I promise now, that I will certainly goe with you on *Munday*, in despite of these interruptions, and serve you with my company to the *Bathe*; which journie, it is time to hasten. But I pray think this

D d 2

pro-

promise so much worth, that it may deserve  
your comming this way on *Munday*, for I  
make it with that reservation. God send  
you Hawks and fortunes of a high pitch.

*Your honest affectionate*  
J. Donne.

*To Sir T.R.*

*SIR,*

**I** Have bespoken you a New-years-gift, that  
is, a good New year, for I have offered  
your name with my soul heartily to God in  
my mornings best Sacrifice: If for custome  
you will doe a particular office in recom-  
pense, deliver this Letter to your Lady,  
now, or when the rage of the Mask is past.  
If you make any haste into the Country, I  
pray let me know it. I would kisse your  
hands before you goe, which I doe now,  
and continue

*Micham, the last of 1607.*  
*as I remember.*

*Your affectionate servant*  
*and lover J. Donne.*

*To*

*To Sir Henry Goodere.*

SIR,

**I** Speak to you before God, I am so much affected with yesterdaies accident, that I think I prophane it in that name. As men which judge Nativities, consider not single Starres, but the Aspects, the concurrence and posture of them; so in this, though no particular past arrest me, or divert me, yet all seems remarkable and enormous. God, which hath done this immediately, without so much as a sickness, will also immediately without supplement of friends, infuse his Spirit of comfort, where it is needed and deserved. I write this to you from the *Spring Garden*, whither I withdrew my self to think of this; and the intensenesse of my thinking ends in this, that by my help Gods work should be imperfected, if by any means I resisted the amasement.

*Your very true friend*  
J. Donne.

Dd 3

To

*To my good friend G.H.*

SIR,

**T**HE little businesse which you left in my hands is now dispatched; if it have hung longer then you thought, it might serve for just excuse, that these small things make as many steps to their end, and need as many motions for the warrant, as much writing of the Clerks, as long expectation of a Seal, as greater. It comes now to you sealed, and with it as strong and assured seals of my service and love to you, if it be good enough for you. I owe you a continuall tribute of Letters. But Sir, even in Princes and Parents, and all States that have in them a naturall Sovereignty, there is a sort of reciprocation, and as descent to doe some offices due to them that serve them: which makes me look for Letters from you, because I have another as valuable a pawn therefore, as your friendship, which is your promise; left

left by the Jailors fault this Letter stick  
long, I must tell you, that I writ and sent it  
12<sup>o</sup> Decemb. 1600.

Your friend and servant and lover  
J. Donne.

12. Decemb. 1600.

---

*To your self.*

S I R,

I Send you here a Translation; but it is  
not onely to beleeve me, it is a great in-  
vention to have understood any piece of  
this Book, whether the gravity of the mat-  
ter, or the Poeticall form, give it his incli-  
nation, and *principium motus*; you are his  
center, or his spheare, and to you as to his  
proper place he addressees himself. Besides  
that all my things, not onely by obligation,  
but by custome, know that that is the way  
they should goe. I spake of this to my  
L. of Bedford, thinking then I had had a co-  
py which I made long since, at Sea, but be-  
cause I finde it not, I have done that again :  
when

when you finde it not unseasonable, let her see it; and if you can think it fit, that a thing that hath either wearied, or distasted you, should receive so much favour, put it amongst her papers: when you have a new stomach to it, I will provide you quickly a new Copy.

*At my Micham  
Hospitall, Aug. 10.*

*Your very true friend and servant  
and lover J. Donne.*

*To the gallant Knight Sir Tho. Lucy.*

*SIR,*  
**B**Ecause in your last Letter, I have an invitation to come to you, though I never thought my self so fallen from my interest, which, by your favour, I prescribe in, in you, and therefore when in the spring I hoped to have strength enough, to come in to those parts, upon another occasion, I always resolved to put my self into your presence too, yet now I aske you more particularly how you dispose of your self; for though I have heard, that you purpose a  
jour-

journey to the *Bath*, and from thence hither, yet I can hope, that my service at *Lincolns Inne* being ended for next Terme, I may have intermission enough to waite upon you at *Polesworth*, before the season call you to *Bath*. I was no easie apprehender of the fear of your departing from us; neither am I easie in the hope of seeing you intirely over suddenly. God loves your soul, if he be loth to let it go inch-meale, and not by swallowings; and he loves it too, if he build it up again stone after stone; his will is not done except his way, and his leaseure be observed. In my particular, I am sorry, if my ingenuity and candor in delivering my self in those points, of which you speak to me, have defaced those impressions which were in you before: if my freedom have occasioned your captivity, I am miserably sorry. I went unprofitably and improvidently, to the utmost end of Truth, because I would go as farre as I could to meet Peace; if my going so far in declaring my self, brought you where you could not



stop. But I was as confident in your strength, as in mine own, so am I still, in him, who strengthens al our infirmities and will, I doubt not, bring you and me together, in all those particulars, so as we shall not part in this world, nor the next. Sir, your own soul cannot be more zealous of your peace, then I am: and God, who loves that zeale in me, will not suffer you to suspect it. I am surpris'd with a necessity of writing now, in a minute; for I sent to *Bedford* house to informe my self of means to write, and your daughter sent me word, of a present messenger, and therefore the rest of this, I shall make up in my prayers to our blessed Saviour, for all happinesses to you.

*Drury house the 22 of  
Decemb. 1607.*

*Your poor servant in Chr. Jesus*

*J. Donne.*

*To*

*To Sir H.G.*

SIR,

**T**His is a second Letter: the enclosed was written before. Now we are sure that *Heidelberge* is taken, and entred with extreme cruelties. Almost all the defenders forsook their stations; only Sir *Ger. Herbert* maintained his nobly, to the repulsing of the enemy three times, but having ease in the other parts, 800 new fresh men were put upon his quarter, and after he had broke 4 Pikes, and done very well, he was shot dead in the place. *Manheim* was soon after besieged, and is still. *Heydelth* was lost the 6 of this moneth. the K. upon news of this, sent to the Spanish Ambassadour, that the people were like to resent it, and therefore, if he doubted ought, he should have a Guard: but I do not see, that he seems to need it, in his own opinion, neither, in truth does he; the people are flat: or trust in God, and the Kings ways: Sir *Hor. Vere* hath written to his wife, (as I am

tol

E e 2

told)



for I am more needy of it then you. And I know you well provided of Christian, and learned, and brave defences against all humane accidents. I will make my best haste after your messenger: and if my self and the place had not been ill provided of horses, I had been the messenger, for you have taught me by granting more to deny no request.

*Pyesford 3 a clock  
just as yours came.*

*Your honest unprofitable friend  
J. Donne.*

---

*To Sir H. G.*

*SIR,*  
**I** Cannot yet serve you with those books of which your Letter spake. In recompense I will tell you a story, which if I had had leasure to have told it you when it was fresh, which was upon Thursday last, might have had some grace for the rareness, and would have tried your love to me, how farre you would adventure to beleeve an improbable thing for my sake who re-

lates it. That day in the morning, there was some end made, by the E. of *Salisbury* and others, who were Arbitrators in some differences between *Herford* and *Mountegle*, *Herford* was ill satisfied in it, and declared himself so farre as to say, he expected better usage in respect not only of his cause but of his expence and service in his Ambassage: to which *Salisbury* replied, that considered how things stood between his Majesty and *Herford* house at the Kings enterance, the King had done him especiall favour in that employment of honour and confidence, by declaring in so publique and great an act and testimony, that he had no ill affections toward him. *Herford* answered, that he was then and ever an honest man to the King: and *Salisbury* said, he denied not that, but yet solemnly repeated his first words again. So that *Herford* seemed not to make answer, but pursuing his own word, said, that whosoever denied him to have been an honest man to the King, lyed. *Salisbury* asked him if he directed that upon him,

him, *Herford* said, upon any who denied this. The earnestnes of both was such, as *Salisbury* accepted it to himself, and made protestation before the LL. present, that he would do nothing else, till he had honorably put off that lye. Within an hour after, *Salisbury* sent him a direct challenge, by his servant M<sup>r</sup> *Knightley*; *Herford* required only an hours leisure of consideration (it is said, it was onely to inform himself of the especiall danger, in dealing so with a Counsellor) but he returned his acceptation: And all circumstances were so clearly handled between them, that S<sup>r</sup> *James* was agreed for the place, and they were both come from their severall lodgings, and upon the way to have met, when they were interrupted by such as from the King were sent to have care of it. So these two have escaped this great danger; but (by my troth) I fear earnestly that Mistrresse *Bolstrod* will not escape that sicknesse in which she labours at this time. I sent this morning to aske of her passage of this night; and the return is,  
that

that she is as I left her yesternight, and then by the strength of her understanding, and voyce, ( proportionally to her fashion, which was ever remisse) by the eavennesse and life of her pulse, and by her temper, I could allow her long life, and impute all her sicknesse to her minde. But the History of her sicknesse, makes me justly fear, that she will scarce last so long, as that you when you receive this letter, may do her any good office, in praying for her; for she hath not for many days received so much as a preserved Barbery, but it returnes, and all accompanied with a Fever, the mother, and an extream ill spleen. Whilest I write this Tuesday morning, from *Bartlet* house one brings me a pacquet to your Master: he is gone; and that Lady and all the company is from town. I thought I might be pardoned, if I thought my self your man for that service to open it, which I did, and for the Letters I will deliver them. What else you bid *Foster* do in his Letter, bid him do it there; for (so God help me) I know not what it



is. I must end now, else the carrier will be gone. God be with you.

*Yours intirely.*

*You know me without a name, and I know not how this Letter goes.*

*To Sir H. G.*

*SIR,*

**I** Had destined all this Tuesday, for the Court, because it is both a Sermon day, and the first day of the Kings being here. Before I was to go forth, I had made up this inclosed pacquet for you, and then came this messenger with your pacquet, of which if you can remember the number, you cannot expect any account thereof from me, who have not half an hour left me before I go forth, and your messenger speakes of a necessity of returning homeward before my returning home. If upon the delivery of them, or any other occasion, there intervene new subject of writing, I shall relieve my

Y<sup>sw</sup>

F f

Self

selfe upon Tuesday, if Tamworth carrier be in town. To the particulars of the Letter to my self, I will give this paper, and line. Of my Lady Bedford, I must say so much as must importune you to burn the Letter; for I would say nothing of her upon record, that should not testifie my thankfulness for all her graces. But upon this motion, which I made to her by letter, and by S<sup>r</sup> Tho. Roes assistance, if any scruple should arise in her, she was somewhat more startling, then I looked for from her: she had more suspicion of my calling, a better memory of my past life, then I had thought her nobility could have admitted: of all which, though I humbly thank God, I can make good use, as one that needs as many remembrances in that kinde, as not only friends but enemies can present; yet I am afraid, they proceed in her rather from some ill impression taken from D. Burger, then that they grow in her self. But whosoever be the conduit, the water is the holy Ghosts, and in that acceptation I take it. For her other way

way of expressing her favour to me, I must say, it is not with that cheerfulness, as heretofore she hath delivered her self towards me. I am almost sorry, that an Elegy should have been able to move her to so much compassion heretofore, as to offer to pay my debts; and my greater wants now, and for so good a purpose, as to come disengaged into that profession, being plainly laid open to her, should work no farther but that she sent me 30*l*. which in good faith she excused with that, which is in both parts true, that her present debts were burdensome, and that I could not doubt of her inclination, upon all future emergent occasions, to assist me. I confesse to you, her former fashion towards me, had given a better confidence; and this diminution in her makes me see, that I must use more friends, then I thought I should have needed. I would you could burn this letter, before you read it, at least do when you have read it. For, I am afraid out of a Contemplation

of mine own unworthinesse, and fortune, that the example of this Lady, should work upon the Lady where you are: for though goodnesse be originally in her, and she do good, for the deeds sake, yet, perchance, she may think it a little wisdome, to make such measure of me, as they who know no better, do. Of any new treaty of a match with *Spain*, I hear nothing. The warres in the *Lowcountries*, to judge by their present state, are very likely to go forward. No word of a Parliament, and I my self have heard words of the K. as directly against any such purpose, as any can sound. I never heard word, till in your letter, of any stirres in *Scotland*, for that of the French K. which you aske, it hath this good ground, That in the Assembly there a proposition hath been made, and well entertained, that the K. should be declared, to have full Jurisdiction in *France*; and no other person to have any. It hath much of the modell and frame of our Oath of Allegiance, but with some modification. It is  
true

true, it goes farther, then that State hath drove in any publique declarations, but not farther then their Schools have drove often and constantly: the easinesse that it hath found in passing thus farre without opposition, puts (perchance unnecessarily) in me a doubt, that they are sure to choak it, at the Royall assent, and therefore oppose it not, by the way, to sweeten the conveyance of their other purposes. Sir, if I stay longer I shall lose the Text, at Court, therefore I kisse your hand, and rest

*Your very true servant*

J. Donne.

*We hear ( but without second as yet )  
that Sir Rich. Philips brother in France,  
hath taken the habit of a Capuchin.*

Ff 3

To

To Sir Thomas Lucy.

SIR,  
**T**His first of *Aprill* I received yours of  
the 21 of *Martii*, which being two days  
after the ordinary *Smithfield* day, I could do  
no more, but seal this letter to be sent to you  
next Tuesday, because I foresee that I shall  
not then be in town. Whatsoever I should  
write now, of any passages of these days,  
would lose the verdure before the letter  
came to you, only give me leave to tell you  
that I need none of those excuses, which  
you have made to your self in my behalfe,  
for my not writing. For your son in law  
came to me, so near the time of his going a-  
way, as it had been impossible to have re-  
covered him with a letter at so farre a di-  
stance, as he was lodged. And my L. *Hunt.*  
messenger received that answer, which, I  
hope, before this time, you know to be  
true, that I had sent the day before, by the  
infallible carrier of *Smithfield*. The Empe-  
rours death may somewhat shorten our  
way

way; for I discern now no reason of going to *Vienna*; but I beleeve it wil extend our busines; so that I promise my self no speedier return by that. If I write no letters into *England* out of these parts, I cannot be without your pardon, if I write not to you, but if I write to any and leave you out, lay all the faults which you have ever pardoned in me, to my charge again. I foresee some reasons, which may make me forbear; but no slacknesse of mine own, shall. Sir, if I have no more, the commodity of writing to you here in *England*, (as, we may be gon before next Tuesday) I tell you, in this departing from you, with the same truth and earnestnesse as I would be beleved to speake in my last departing, and transmigration from the whole world, that I leave not behinde me a heart, better affected to you, nor more devoted to your service, then I carry with me. Almighty God blesse you, with such a reparation in your health, such an establishment in your estate, such a comfort in your children, such a peace in your conscience,



conscience, and such a true cheerfulness in your heart, as may be strong seals to you, of his eternall gracious purpose upon you. This morning I spend in surveying and emptying my Cabinet of Letters; and at the top of all I light upon this Letter lately received, which I was loth to bury. I chose to send it you, to mine own condemnation; because a man so busie as he is, descending to this expressing of himself in verse, I am inexcusable towards you, for disobeying a commandment of yours, of that kinde; but I relie upon the generall, that I am sure you are sure, that I never refuse any thing for lazinessse, nor morosity, and therefore make some other excuse for me. You have been so long used to my hand that I stand not to excuse the hasty raggednessse of this Letter. The very illnessse of the writing, is a good argument that I forced a time, in the fulnessse of businesse, to kisse your hand, and to present my thanks as for all your favours, and benefits, so principally for keeping me alive in the memory of the

the noblest Countesse, whose commandement, if it had been her La<sup>ps</sup> pleasure to have any thing said or done in her service, at *Heydelberg*, I should have been glad to have received. Sir, God blesse you, & spiritus principalis confirmet te; and

*Your very true and affectionate servant in Chr. Ies.*  
J. Donne.

4. Apr. 1619.

---

*To the honourable Knight S<sup>r</sup> Henry Goodere.*

S I R,

**A**S you are a great part of my businesse, when I come to *London*, so are you when I send. More then the office of a visitation brings this Letter to you now; for I remember that about this time you purposed a journey to fetch, or meet the Lad. *Huntington*. If you justly doubt any long absence, I pray send to my lodging my written Books: and if you may stay very long, I pray send that Letter in which I sent you

G g

cer-

certain heads which I purposed to enlarge,  
for I have them not in any other paper :  
and I may finde time in your absence to do  
it, because I know no stronger argument  
to move you to love me, but because you  
have done so, doe so still, to make my rea-  
son better, and I shall at last prescribe in  
you

*Yours,*  
J. Donne.

Micham Wednesday.

*To Sir H.G. at Polesworth.*

*S I R,*

**T**his 25 I have your letter of 21, which  
I tell you so punctually, because by it,  
nor by any other, I doe not discern that you  
received my paquet of Books; not that I  
looked for so quick a return of the Sermon,  
nor of my Cases of conscience, but that I  
forget so absolutely what I write, and am  
so sure that I write confidently to you, that  
it is some pain to remain in any jealousy  
that any Letter is miscarried. That which

I writ to you of my L. *Treasur.* disposition to you, I had from M<sup>r</sup> *Har*; and I understood it to be his desire to convey it through me. The last account which we have of my L. *Donc.* is, by Letters of the 2<sup>o</sup> of this; by which also we saw, that the first Letters of his convalescence, were but propheticall; for he was let blood a second time, and is not strong enough yet to receive audience. Though I be not Dean of *Pauls* yet, my L. of *Warwick* hath gone so low, as to command of me the office of being Master of my game, in our wood about him in *Essex*. I pray be you content to be my officer too, the Steward of my services to all to whom you know them to be due in your walk, and continue your own assurance that I am

*Your affectionate servant in Chr. J<sup>es</sup>.*

J. Donne.

*To my worthy friend F.H.*

SIR,

I Can scarce doe any more this week then I send you word why I writ not last. I had then seposed a few daies for my preparation to the Communion of our B. Saviours body; and in that solitarinesse and arraignment of my self, digested some meditations of mine, and apparelled them (as I use) in the form of a Sermon: for since I have not yet utterly delivered my self from this intemperance of scribling (though I thank God my accesses are lesse and lesse vehement) I make account that to spend all my little stock of knowledge upon matter of delight, were the same error, as to spend a fortune upon Masks and Banqueting houses: I chose rather to build in this poor fashion, some Spittles, and Hospitals, where the poor and impotent sinner may finde some relief, or at least understanding of his infirmity. And if they be too weak to serve posterity, yet for the present by contemplation of them, &c.

*To*

*To Sir H. G.*

*SIR,*

I Have the honour of your Letter, which, I am almost sorry to have received: some few daies before the receit thereof D. *Turner*, who accompanied my *L. Carow* to *Sion* to dinner, shewed me a Letter from you, from which I conceived good hopes that your busineses being devolved into the hands of the Treasurer, had been in much more forwardnesse, then by your Letter to me they appear to be. I beseech God establish them, and hasten them, and with them, or without them, as he sees most conducible to his purpose upon you, continue in you a relying upon him, and a satisfaction in his waies. I know not whether any Letter from your son, or any other report, may have given you any mention of me; he writ to me from the *Compter*, that he was under a trifling arrest, and that 3<sup>l</sup> and some little more would discharge him. I sent my man with that money, but bid him see it

G g 3

em.

employed for his discharge: he found more actions, and returned. Next day he writ to me that 8<sup>l</sup> would discharge him, and that M<sup>r</sup> Selden would lay down half. But M<sup>r</sup> Selden and I speaking together, thought it the fittest way, to respite all, till, in a few daies, by his writing to you, we might be directed therein; and in the mean time, took order with the Keeper to accommodate him, and I bade my man *Martin*, as from himself, to serve his present want with some things. Since we told him, that we would attend a return of his Letter to you, I heard no more of him, but I hear he is out. Whosoever serves you with relations from this Town, I am sure prevents me of all I can say. The Palatinate is absolutely lost; for before this Letter come to you, we make account that *Heydelberg* and *Frankindale* is lost, and *Manheme* distressed. *Mansfield* came to *Breda*, and *Gonzales*, to *Brussels*, with great losses on both sides, but equall. The P. of *Orange* is but now come to *Breda*, and with him, all that he is able  
to



to make, even out of the Garrisons of their Towns. The ways of victuall to *Spinolaes* Army, are almost all precluded by him, and he likely to put upon the raising of *Spinola*, between whom and the Town, there are hotter disputes, then ever our times saw. The Secretary of the States here shewed me a Letter yesternight, that the Town spends 6000 pound of powder a day, and hath spent since the siege 123000 pounds. *Argis* Regiment and my *L. News*, are so diminished by commings away, as that both (if think) make not now in Muster above 600. *M<sup>r</sup> Gage* is returning to *Rome*, but of his Negotiation I dare say nothing by a Letter of adventure. The direction which his Ma<sup>ty</sup> gave for Preachers, had scandalized many; therefore he descended to pursue them with certain reasons of his proceedings therein; and I had commandment to publish them in a Sermon at the Crosse, to as great a Congregation as ever I saw together, where they received comfortable assurance of his Ma<sup>ties</sup> constancy in Religion, and of his desire

fire that all men should be bred in the knowledge of such things, as might preservethem from the superstition of Rome. I presume it is but a little while before we shall see you here, but that little time is likely to produce many things greatly considerable. Present, I pray, my thankfull services to your good daughters. I can give them no better a room in my prayers, and wishes, then my poore *Constance* hath, and they have that; so have you Sir, with

*Your very true friend and servant in Chr. Jesh.*

J. Donne.

To

*To the worthiest Knight Sir Henry Goodere.*

SIR,

**O**Ur blessed Saviour, who abounds in power and goodnesse towards us all, bleſſe you, and your family, with bleſſings proportioned to his ends in you all, and bleſſe you with the teſtimony of a rectified conſcience, of having diſcharged all the offices of a father, towards your diſcreet and worthy daughters, and bleſſe them with a ſatisfaction, and quiſcence, and more, with a complacency and a joy, in good ends, and ways towards them, *Amen.* Your man brought me your Letter of the 8 of December this 21 of the ſame, to *Chelſey*, and gives me the largeneſſe, till friday to ſend a letter to *Pauls* houſe. There can ſcarce be any peece of that, or of thoſe things whereof you require light from me, that is not come to your knowledge, by ſome clearer way, between the time of your Letter, and this. Beſides the report of my death, hath thus much of truth in it, that though I be

H h

not

not dead, yet I am buried within a few weeks after I immured my self in this house, the infection strook into the town, into so many houses, as that it became ill manners, to make any visits. Therefore I never went to *Knoll*, nor *Hamworth*, nor *Ken-ton*, nor to the Court, since the Court came into these quarters, nor am yet come to *London*; therefore I am little able to give you account of high stages. Perchance you look not so low, as our ordinary Gazetta, and that tells us, (with a second assurance) that the D. of *Brunswick, Christian*, is dead of an Ague. My L. of *Dorset* even upon the day, when he should have been installed with his six fellowes, fell sick at *London*; and at Court (which does not exalt all men) his Fever was exalted to the plague; but he is in good convalescence. Of the Navy I hear of no great lim come back yet, but my L. of *Essex*; something of the disappointing of the designe they had, is imputed to some difference, in point of command, between him and the M<sup>r</sup>. of the Ordinance, my L. of *Valencia*,

*lencia*, but as yet, there is little manifested. Already is issued a Proclamation, that there be no disbanding of the Souldiers, upon their landing, in what part soever, and that his Majesty hath present imployment for them. What the main busines at *Haghe* hath been, I know nothing; but I hear, that their offer of pawning of Jewells to a very very great value, to the States or private men, hath found no acceptance, at least found no money. Occasionally I heard from the *Haghe*, that the Queen having taken into her care, the promoving and advancing of some particular mens busineses, by way of recommendations to the Duke, expressed her self very royally, in your behalf. This I tell you not, as though you knew it not, but because I had the fortune to see it in a Letter of the simple Gentlewoman, from thence; by which name, if you know her not, I have omitted heretofore to tell you a good tale. They continue at Court, in the resolution of the Queen pastorall; when *Q. Anne* loved gamboils, you loved the

Court; perchance you may doubt whether you be a thorough Courtier, if you come not up to see this, The Queen a Shepperdesse: but I speak not this, by way of counsell, to draw you up, it is not only *Non Dominus, sed ego*, but *nec Deus nec ego*, to call you hither, but upon fair appearances of usefull commings. Mr *George Herbert* is here at the receipt of your letter, and with his service to you, tells you that all of *Uvedall* house are well. I reserve not the mention of my Lady *Huntington* to the end of my Letter, as grains to make the gold weight, but as tincture to make the better gold, when you finde room to intrude so poor and impertinent a name, as mine is, in her presence. I beseech you, let her Lad: know, that she hath sowed her favours towards me, in such a ground, that if I be grown better (as I hope I am) her favours are grown with me, and though they were great when she conferred them, yet, (if I mend every day) they increase in me every day, and therefore every day multiply my thankfulness towards her

her Ladiship : say what you will ( if you like not this expresseion ) that may make her Ladiship know, that I shall never let fall the memory, nor the just valuation of her noble favours to me, nor leave them unrequited in my Exchequer, which is, the blessings of God upon my prayers. If I should write another sheet, I should be able to serve your curiosity no more of Dukes nor LL. nor Courts, and this half line serves to tell you, that I am truly

*Your poor friend and humble servant in Chr. J<sup>es</sup>.*  
J. Donne.

---

*To my honoured friend G. G. Esquire.*

SIR,  
**N** Either your Letters, nor silence, needs excuse; your friendship is to me an abundant possession; though you remember me but twice in a year: He that could have two harvests in that time, might justly value his land at a high rate; but, Sir, as we doe not onely then thank our land,

H h 3

when



when we gather the fruit, but acknowledge that all the year she doth many motherly offices in preparing it: so is not friendship then onely to be esteemed, when she is delivered of a Letter, or any other reall office, but in her continuall propensnesse and inclination to do it. This hath made me easie in pardoning my long silences, and in promising my self your forgivenesse for not answering your Letter sooner. For my purpose of proceeding in the profession of the law, so farre as to a title you may be pleased to correct that imagination, wheresoever you finde it. I ever thought the study of it my best entertainment, and pastime; but I have no ambition, nor designe upon the style. Of my Anniversaries, the fault that I acknowledge in my self, is to have descended to print any thing in verse, which though it have excuse even in our times, by men who professe, and practise much gravitie; yet I confesse I wonder how I declined to it, and do not pardon my self: But for the other part of the imputation of having  
said

said too much, my defēce is, that my purpose was to say as well as I could: for since I never saw the Gentlewoman, I cannot be understood to have bound my self to have spoken just truths, but I would not be thought to have gone about to praise her, or any other in rime; except I took such a person, as might be capable of all that I could say. If any of those Ladies think that Mistris *Drewry* was not so, let that Lady make her self fit for all those praises in the book, and they shall be hers. Sir, this messenger makes so much haste that I cry you mercy for spending any time of this letter in other imployment then thanking you for yours. I hope before *Christmas* to see *England*, and kisse your hand, which shall ever, (if it disdain not that office) hold all the Keyes of the libertie and affection, and all the faculties of your ma<sup>y</sup>, w<sup>ch</sup> I shall shew you in due season. I have not time to write more at present. I am, Sir, your most affectionate servant,  
J. D.  
Paris the 14 of  
Aprill, here, 1612.

To my honoured friend G. G. Esquire.

SIR,

I Should not only send you an account by my servant, but bring you an account of-  
ter my self, ( for our Letters are our selves ) and in them absent friends meet ) how I do, but that two things make me forbear that writing: first, because it is not for my gravity, to write of feathers, and strawes, and in good faith, I am no more, considered in my body, or fortune. And then because whensoever I tell you how I doe, by a Letter, before that Letter comes to you, I shall be otherwise, then when it left me. At this time, I humbly thank God, I am only not worse; for, I should as soon look for Roses at this time of the year, as look for increase of strength. And if I be no worse all spring, then now, I am much better, for, I make account that those Church services, which I would be very loth to decline, will spend somewhat; and, if I can gather so much as will bear my charges, recover

cover so much strength at *London*, as I shall spend at *London*, I shall not be loth to be left in that state wherein I am now, after that's done; But I do but discourse, I do not wish; life, or health, or strength, (I thank God) enter not into my prayers for my self: for others they do; and amongst others, for your sick servant, for such a servant taken so young, and healed so long, is half a child to a master, and so truly I have observed that you have bred him, with the care of a father. Our blessed Saviour look graciously upon him, and glorifie himself in him, by his way of restitution to health; And by his way of peace of conscience in

*Your very true friend and servant in Chr. Jos.*

J. Donne.

---

SIR,

**T**His advantage you, and my other friends have, by my frequent Fevers, that I am so much the oftener at the gates

I i

of

of heaven, and this advantage by the solitude and close imprisonment that they reduce me to after, that I am thereby the oftener at my prayers; in which, I shall never leave out your happinelle; and, I doubt not, but amongst his many other blessings, God will adde to you some one for my prayers. A man would almost be content to dye, (if there were no other benefit in death,) to hear of so much sorrow, and so much good testimony from good men, as I, (God be blessed for it) did upon the report of my death. Yet, I perceive it went not through all; for, one writ unto me, that some (and he said of my friends) conceived, that I was not so ill, as I pretended, but withdrew my self, to save charges, and to live at ease, discharged of preaching. It is an unfriendly, and God knows, an ill grounded interpretation: for in these times of necessity, and multitudes of poor ~~there is no~~ possibility of saving to him that hath any tendernesse in him; and for affording my ease, I have been always more  
sorry,

sorry, when I could not preach, then any could be, that they could not hear me. It hath been my desire, ( and God may be pleased to grant it me ) that I might die in the Pulpit; if not that, yet that I might take my death in the Pulpit, that is, die the sooner by occasion of my former labours. I thanke you, for keeping our *George* in in your memory, I hope God reserves it for so good a friend as you are, to send me the first good newes of him. For the *Diamond Lady*, you may safely deliver *Roper*, whatsoever belongs to me, and he will give you a discharge for the money. For my *L. Percy*, we shall speake of it, when we meet at *London*; which, as I do not much hope before Christmas, so I do not much fear at beginning of Tearm; for I have intreated one of my fellowes to preach to my Lord Maior, at *Pauls* upon Christmas day, and reserved Candlemas day to my self for that service, about which time also, will fall my Lent Sermon, except my Lord Chamberlaine beleve me to be

61 I i 2 dead,

dead, and leave me out; for as long as I live, and am not speechlesse, I would not decline that service. I have better leasure to write, then you to read, yet I will not oppresse you with too much letter, God bleesse you, and your sonne, as

*Your poor friend and humble servant*  
*in Christ Jesus*

J. Donne.

*To the Lady G.*

MADAM,

I Am not come out of *England*, if I remain in the Noblest part of it, your minde; yet I confesse, it is too much diminution to call your minde, any part of *England*, or of this world, since every part even of your body, deserves titles of higher dignity. No Prince would be loth to die, that were assured of so faire a tombe



to preserve his memory : but I have a greater vantage then so ; for since there is a Religion in friendship, and a death in absence, to make up an intire frame there must be a heaven too : and there can be no heaven so proportionall to that Religion , and that death, as your favour. And I am gladder that it is a heaven, then that it were a Court, or any other high place of this world, because I am likelier to have a room there then here ; and better cheap. Madam my best treasure, is time ; and my best imployment of that , is to study good wishes for you, in which I am by continuall meditation so learned, that your own good Angell, when it would do you most good, might be content to come and take instructions from

*Your humble and affectionate servant*

J. Donne.

To your selfe.

SIR,

**T**He first of this moneth I received a Letter from you, no Letter comes so late, but that it brings fresh newes hither. Though I presume, M<sup>r</sup> Pore, and since, Sir Rob. Rich came after the writing of that Letter, yet it was good newes to me, that you thought me worthy of so good a testimony. And you were subtile in the disguise: for you shut up your Letter, thus, *Lond. 22.* in our stile, but I am not so good a Cabalist, as to finde in what moneth it was written. But, Sir, in the offices of so spirituall a thing as friendship, so momentary a thing as time, must have no consideration. I keep it therefore to read every day, as newly written: to which vexation it must be subject, till you relieve it with an other. If I ought you not a great many thanks for every particular part of it, I should yet thanke you for the length;  
and

and love it, as my mistresses face, every line and feature, but best all together. All that I can do towards retribution, is, (as other bankrupts do in prison) to make means by Commissioners, that a great debt may be accepted by small summes weekly. And in that proportion I have paid my tribute to you, almost ever since I came, and shall still do so. You know that they say, those are the strongest, and the firmest, and most precious things, which are composed of the most, and smallest parts. I will flatter my self therefore, that the number of my Letters may at last make a strong argument of my desire to serve you, but because I remember, out of this Philosophy, that they should be little, as well as many, lest this Letter should not get into the building, it shall be no bigger; thus much addition will not much disfigure it, that it sweare to you that I am

*Your affectionate servant*

*J. Donne.*

*Sir,*

Sir, I cry you mercy for sealing your sisters letter, but I deliver you up my authority, and I remember you, that you have hers to open it again. You will the easilier forgive me, that I write no newes, when you observe by this transgression, that I live in a place which hath quenched in me even the remembrance of good manners. By naming her, I have made my postscript the worthiest place of my letter: and therefore I chuse that place to present my service to all the company at our lodging; in which house, if I cannot get room for a pallat, at my return, my comfort is, that I can ever hope to be so near them as the Spittle in the Savoy, where they receive Travellers.

---

To

---

*To the Honourable Knight, Sir*

ROBERT KARRE.

*Sir,*

**T**Hough I have left my bed, I have not left my bed-side; I sit there still, and as a Prisoner discharged, sits at the Prison doore, to beg Fees, so sit I here, to gather crummes. I have used this leisure, to put the meditations had in my sicknesse, into some such order, as may minister some holy delight. They arise to so many sheetes (perchance 20.) as that without staying for that furniture of an Epistle, That my Friends importun'd me to Print them, I importune my Friends to receive them Printed. That, being in hand, through this long Trunke, that reaches from Saint Pauls, to Saint James, I whisper into your eare this question, whether there be any uncomli- nesse, or unseasonableness, in presenting matter of Devotion, or Mortification, to

K k

that

that Prince, whom I pray God nothing may ever Mortifie, but Holinesse. If you allow my purposes in generall, I pray cast your eye upon the Title and the Epistle, and rectifie me in them : I submit substance, and circumstance to you, and the poore Author of both,

*Your very humble and very thankfull*

*Servant*

*in Christ Jesus*

**J. Donne.**

To

To your selfe.

SIR,

**A**GE becomes nothing better then Friendship ; therefore your Letters, which are ever good effects of friendship, delight to be old before I receive them ; for it is but a fortnight since those Letters which you sent by Captain Peter found me at Spâ ; presently upon the receipt, I adventured by your leave to bestow the first minutes upon this Letter to your faire Noble Sister ; And because I found no voice at Spâ of any Messenger, I respited my Writing to you, till I came thus much nearer. Upon the way hither, another Letter from you overtooke me, which by my L. Chandos love to me for your sake, was sent after me to Mastricht : He came to Spâ within two houres after I went away ; which I tell you to let you see, that my Fortune hath still that spirefull constancy, to bring me near my desires, and intercept me

Kk 2

If



If I should write to you any newes from this place, I should forestall mine owne Market, by telling you beforehand that which must make me acceptable to you at my comming. I shall sneake into *London*, about the end of *August*. In my remotest distances I did not more need your Letters then I shall then. Therefore if you shall not be then in *London*, I beseech you to tinkle mee at *Constantinople*, and write one large Letter to be left at my Ladie *Bartlets* my lodging; for I shall come in extreame darknesse and ignorance, except you give me light. If *Sir John Brooke* be within your reach, present my humble service and thankfulnessse to him; if he be not, I am glad, that to my Conscience, which is a thousand witnesses, I have added you for one more, that I came as near as I could to doe it. I shall run so fast from this place, through *Amperpe*, and some parts of *Floland*, that all that love which you could perchance be content to expresse by Letters if I lay still, may be more thirstily bestowed

stowed upon that one Letter, which is by  
your favour, to meet me, and to welcome  
to *London*

Your unworthy, but very

true Friend,

J. Donne.

---

SIR,

**I**T is one ill Affection of a desperate  
debtor, that he dares not come to an ac-  
count, nor take knowledge how much he  
owes; this makes me that I dare not tell  
you how manie letters I have received from  
you since I came to this Towne, I had three  
the first by the Cooke, who brought none  
but yours, nor ever came to me, to let me  
know what became of the rest: the two o-  
ther of the 7. and 8. of *March*, came in a let-  
ter which *Sir H. Wotton* writ to me from

*Amyens*; there is not a fize of paper in the Palace, large enough to tell you how much I esteeme my selfe honoured in your remembrances; nor strong enough to wrap up a heart so full of good affections towards you, as mine is. When any thing passes between Sir *Thomas Roe* and you, tell him I am not the lesse his Servant, for not saying so by often letters: for by my troth, I am that so much as he could desire I should be, when he began to love me. Sir *Thomas Lucies* businesse, and perchance sadnesse forbid me writing now. I have written to him (whilest I lived in darknesse, whether my Letters came to you or no) by another way, and if my poore Letters were any degree of service, I should doe it often, and rather be mine own Post, then leave any thing undone, to which he would give such an interpretation, as that it were an Argument of my Devotion to him. For my purpose of proceeding in the profession of the Law, so far as to a Title, you may be pleased to correct that imagination where you finde

it.

it. I ever thought the study of it my best entertainment and pastime, but I have no ambition, nor design upon the Stile. Of my Anniversaries the fault which I acknowledge in my selfe, is to have descended to print any thing in Verse, which though it have excuse, even in our times, by example of men, which one would thinke should as little have done it, as I; yet I confesse I wonder how I declined to it, and doe not pardon my self. But for the other part of the imputation, of having said so much, my defence is, that my purpose was to say as well as I could: for since I never saw the Gentlewoman, I cannot be understood to have bound my selfe to have spoken just Truth: but I would not be thought to have gone about to praise any bodie in rime, except I tooke such a Person, as might be capable of all that I could say. If any of those Ladies think that Mistris *Drury* was not so, let that Ladie make her selfe fit for all the those praises in the Booke, and it shall be hers. Nothing is farther from colour or  
ground

ground of Truth, then that which you write of Sir Robert Drurys going to Masse. No man of our Nation hath been more forward to apply himselfe to the Church of the Religion where he hath come, nor to relieve their wants, where that Demonstration hath beene needfull. I know not yet whether Sir John Brookes purpose of being very shortly here, be not a just reason to make me forbear writing to him. I am sure that I would fainest do that in writing or abstaining which should be most acceptable to him. It were in vain to put into this letter any relation of the Magnificence which have been here at publication of these marriages; for at this time there come into *England* so many *Frenchmen*, as I am sure you shall heare all at least. If they speak not of above eight hundred horse well caparofond, you may believe it; and you may believe, that no Court in Christendome had beene able to have appeared so brave in that kinde. But if they tell you of any other stufte, then Copper, or any other exercise

exercife of armes then running at the Quin-  
tain, and the Ring, you may be bold to  
ſay *Pardone moy*. Sir, this meſſenger makes  
ſo much haſte that I cry you mercy for  
ſpending any time of this Letter, in other  
imploymēt, then thanking you for  
yours, and promiſing you more before  
my remove from hence. I pray venture no  
Letter to me by any other way then M.  
*John Bruer* at the *Queens Armes* a Mercer  
in *Cheapſide*, who is always like to know  
where we are; And make me by loving  
me ſtill, worthy to be

*Your friend and ſervant*

J. Donne.

L 1

To

To my Honoured friend M<sup>r</sup> George  
Gerrard.

S I R,

I Cannot chuse but make it a preface that  
I shall have no good fortune in *England*,  
that I mist the honour of enjoying that  
company, which you brought to town. But  
I beseech you let my ill luck determine in  
that ominousnesse: for if my not comming  
should be by her or you interpreted for a  
negligence/ or coldnesse in me, I were  
already in actuall and present affliction. For  
that Ecclesiasticall Lady of whom you  
write, since I presume it is a work of dark-  
nesse that you go about, we will deferre  
it for winter. Perchance the cold weather,  
may be as good physique to you, as she,  
for quenching you. I have changed my  
purpose of going to *Windſor*, and will go  
directly into the Wight: which I tell you  
not as a concerning thing, but in obedi-  
ence



ence to your commandement, as one  
poor testimony that I am

*Your affectionate servant*

J. Donne.

---

*To my very worthy friend M<sup>r</sup> George  
Gerrard.*

S I R,

**T**His is the fourth of this moneth, and  
I receive your Pacquet so late, that I  
have scarce waking time enough to tell  
you so, or to write any thing but dreams.  
I have both your Letters, mother and  
daughter, and am gladder of them, then if  
I had the mother and daughter here in our  
neighbourhood; you know I mean Sir  
H. Gooderes parties. Sir, you do me double  
honour when my name passes through  
you to that Noble Lady in whose presence  
you are. It is a better end and a better way

L 1 2

to

to that then I am worth. I can give you nothing in recompense of that favor, but good counsell: which is to speake sparingly of any ability in me, lest you indanger your own reputation, by overvaluing me. If I shall at any time take courage by your Letter, to expresse my meditations of that Lady in writing, I shall scarce think lesse time to be due to that employment, then to be all my life in making those verses, and so take them with me and sing them amongst her fellow Angels in Heaven. I should be loath that in any thing of mine, composed of her, she should not appear much better then some of those of whom I have written. And yet I cannot hope for better expressings then I have given of them. So you see how much I should wrong her, by making her but equall to others. I would I could be believed, when I say that all that is written of them, is but prophecy of her. I must use your favour in getting her pardon, for having brought her into so narrow, and  
low-

low-rooft a room as my consideration, or for adventuring to give any estimation of her, and when I see how much she can pardon, I shall the better discern how far farther I may dare to offend in that kinde. My noble neighbour is well, and makes me the steward of his service to you. Before this Letter reaches you, I presume you will bee gathering towards these parts, and then all newes will meet you so fast, as that out of your abundance you will impart some to

*Your affectionate friend to*

*serve you.*

J. Donne.

L. l. 3

To



To your selfe.

SIR,

**A**Ll your other Letters, which came to me by more hazardous waies, had therefore much merit in them; but for your Letter by M. Pory, it was but a little degree of favour, because the messenger was so obvious, and so certain, that you could not chuse but write by him. But since he brought me as much Letter as all the rest, I must accept that, as well as the rest. By this time, M. Garret, when you know in your conscience that you have sent no Letter, you beginne to look upon the superscription, and doubt that you have broken up some other bodies Letter: but whose so ever it were it must speak the same language, for I have heard from no body. Sir, if there be a Proclamation in *England* against writing to me, yet since it is thereby become a matter of State, you might have told M. Pory so. And you might have  
told

told him, what became of Sir *Tho. Lucies* Letter, in my first pacquet, ( for any Letter to him makes any paper a pacquet, and any peece of single money a Medall ) and what became of my Lady *Kingsmels* in my second, and of hers in my third, whom I will not name to you in hope that it is perished, and you lost the honour of giving it. Sir, mine own desire of being your servant, hath sealed me a Patent of that place during my life, and therefore it shall not be in the power of your forbidding, (to which your stiffe silence amounts ) to make me leave being

*Your very affectionate servant*

J. Donne.

To

*To my Honoured friend M. George Garrat.*

S I R,

I Would I were so good an Alchimist to  
perswade you that all the vertue of the  
best affections, that one could expresse in  
a sheet, were in this ragge of paper. It be-  
comes my fortune to deale thus in single  
money; and I may hit better with this  
hail-shot of little Letters (because they may  
come thick) then with great bullets; and  
trouble my friends lesse. I confesse it were  
not long enough if it came to present my  
thanks for all the favours you have done  
me; but since it comes to begge more, per-  
chance it may be long enough, because I  
know not how short you will be with an  
absent friend. If you will but write that you  
give me leave to keep that name still, it  
shall be the gold of your Letter: and for  
allay, put in as much newes as you will.  
We are in a place where scarce any money  
appeares, but base: as, I confesse, all mat-  
ters

ters of Letters is in respect of the testimonies of friendship; but obey the corruption of this place, and fill your Letters with worse stuffe then your own. Present my service to all those Gentlemen whom I had the honour to serve at our lodging, I cannot flie an higher pitch, then to say, that I am so much their servant as you can say I am. At the Queens armes in *Cheapside*, which is a *Mercers*, you may hear of one *M. John Brewer*, who will convay any Letter directed to me at *Sir Rob. Druries at Amiens*, though he know not me: and I should be glad to hear that this first that I sent into *England* had the fortune to finde you.

*Yours*

*J. Donne.*

*M m*

*To*



To your fair sister.

MADAM,

**T**He dignity, and the good fortune due to your Letter, hath preserved a packet so well, that through *France* and *Germany* it is at last come to me at *Spa*. This good experience makes me in despite of contrary appearances, hope that I shall finde some messenger for this, before I remove, though it be but two dayes. For, even Miracles are but little and light things, when any thing which either concerns your worthinelle is in consideration or my valuation of it. If I faile in this hope of a messenger, I shall not grudge to do my self this service of bringing it into *England*, that you may hear me say there, that I have thus much profited by the honour of your conversation, and Contemplation, that I am, as your vertues are, every where Equall; and that, that which I shall say then at *London*, I thought and subscribed

at

at Sp<sup>a</sup>, which is, that I will never be any thing else, then

*Your very humble and affectionate servant*

J. Donne.

---

*To the Honourable Knight Sir  
Henry Goodere.*

S I R,

**B**Ecause to remain in this sort guilty in your Lordships opinion doth not onely defeat all my future indevours, but lay a heavier burden upon me, of which I am more sensible, which is ingratitude towards your Lordship, by whose favours I have been formerly so much bound; I hope your Lordship will pardon me this care and diligence which I use to rectifie my self towards you. To which purpose I humbly beseech your Lordship, to admit thus much into your consideration, that I

M m 2

nei-

neither hunted after this businesse at first; but apprehended it as it was presented to me, and might perchance have fallen into worse hands, nor proceeded otherwise therein, then to my poor discretion at that time seemed lawfull and requisite and necessary for my reputation, who held my selfe bound to be able to give satisfaction to any who should doubt of the case. Of all which, if your Lordship were returned to your former favourable opinions of me, you might be pleased to make this some argument, that after his Majesty had shewed his inclination to the first motion made in my behalf, I was not earnest to urge and solicit that advantage of priority, but as became me, contented my self to joyne with him who had made a later petition therein: and as soon as I understood how it was opposed or distasted, I threw it down at your Lordships feet, and abandoned it to your pleasure. Which it is necessary for me to say at this time, lest, if he who was interessed with me in that businesse shall have proceeded any far-

farther therein since that time, your Lordship might conceive new suspicions of me. That your Lordships name was at all used therein, or that any words of mine occasioned such an error in my servant, I am so sorry as nothing but a conscience of a true guiltinesse of having performed an injury to your Lordship (which can never fall upon me) could affect me more. But I, who to the measure of my comprehension, have ever understood your Lordships nobility and evenness, cannot fear that your Lordship will punish an oversight, like a crime: which should be effected upon me, if your Lordship should continue your disfavour towards me, since no penalty could come so burdalous to my minde and to my fortune as that. And since the repose of both consists in your Lordships favour, I humbly intreat to be restored to your favour, giving your Lordship my faith in pawn that I will be as wary of forfeting it by any second occasion, as I am sorry for this.

*Yours J. D.*

M m 3

To

To the *Honourable Knight Sir Robert*  
*Karre.*

SIR,

I Had rather like the first best; not onely because it is cleanlier, but because it reflects least upon the other party, which, in all jest and earnest, in this affair, I wish avoided. If my Muse were onely out of fashion, and but wounded and maimed like Free-will in the *Roman Church*, I should adventure to put her to an Epithalamion. But since she is dead, like Free-will in our Church, I have not so much Muse left as to lament her losse. Perchance this businesse may produce occasions, wherein I may expresse my opinion of it, in a more serious manner. Which I speake neither upon any apparent conjecture, nor upon any overvaluing of my abilities, but out of a generall readinesse and alacrity to be serviceable and gratefull in any kinde. In both which poor vertues of mine, none  
can

can pretend a more primary interest, then  
you may, in

Your humble and affectionate servant

J. Donne.

To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Kerrie  
Gentleman of his Highnesse Bedchamber.

SIR,

I Have often sinned towards you, with a  
presumption of being pardoned, but  
now I do it, without hope, and without  
daring to intreat you to pardon the fault.  
In which there are thus many degrees of  
importunity. That I must begge of you to  
christen a child, which is but a daughter,  
and in which you must be content to be  
associated with Ladies of our own alli-  
ance, but good women, and all this up-  
on Thursday next in the afternoon. Sir, I  
have so many and so indeleble impressions  
of

of your favour to me, as they might serve to spread over all my poor race. But since I see that I stand like a tree, which once a year beares, though no fruit, yet this Mast of children, and so am sure, that one year or other I should afflict you with this request, I had rather be presently under the obligations and the thankfulnesse towards you, then meditate such a trouble to you against another year. I was desirous this paper might kisse your hands as soon as you came, that if any other diversions made this inconvenient to you, I might have an other exercise of your favor, by knowing so much from you, who in every act of yours make me more and more

*Your humble and thankfull servant*

17 Aprill.

**J. Donne.**

To



To the Honourable Knight, Sir

ROBERT KARRE.

Sir,

**P**Erchance others may have told you, that I am relapsed into my Fever; but that which I must intreat you to condole with me, is, that I am relapsed into good degrees of health; your cause of sorrow for that, is, that you are likely to be the more troubled with such an impertinencie, as I am; and mine is, that I am fallen from fair hopes, of ending all; yet I have scaped no better cheap, then that I have paid death one of my Children for my Ransome. Because I loved it well, I make account that I dignifie the memorie of it, by mentioning of it to you, else I should not be so homely. Impute this brevitie of writing to you upon no Subject, to my sicknesse, in which men use to talke idly; but my profession of desiring to bee retained

tained in your memorie, impute to your  
owne Vertues, which have wrought so  
much upon

Your humble servant  
John Dornie.

*To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.*

SIR,

**I** Make account that it is a day of great  
distribution of Honours at Court: I  
would not therefore lose my part, and in-  
crease therein; since every Letter admitted  
by you from me, is a new stone in my best  
building, which is, my roome in your ser-  
vice: so much you adde to me, everie time  
you give me leave thus to kisse your hands.  
But, Sir, everie addition preimagins a bee-  
ing, and the time of my being and Cre-  
ation is not yet come: which I am sure  
you will advance; because else I am no  
competent Subject of your favours, and  
additions. I know, by your forbearing

to

to tell mee so, that my L. hath had no  
commoditie to move the K. and if this  
Paper speake one word of difference, or  
impatience in my name, by my troth it  
lies. Onely give it leave to tell you, that  
that L. whom perchance the K. may bee  
pleased to heare in it, is an old and mo-  
mentanie man, and it may be late labour-  
ing for his assistance, next Winter. Besides,  
since it may bee possible that the Master  
of the Rolles may a little resent this suite,  
there could be no fitter time, then now, to  
make him easie, as things stand with him  
at this time. If you stay in Towne this  
Night, and no longer, I beseech you af-  
ford me a few of your late Minutes at your  
own lodging, where I will wait upon you  
according to any directions, which by  
this Gent. or otherwise I shall receive from  
you.

*Your humble servant*

*John Donne.*

To the Honourable Knight, Sir

Robert Karre.

**I**F I would caluminate, I could say no  
 ill of that Gentleman: I know not  
 whether my L. or my selfe took the first  
 apprehension of it; but I remember that  
 very soone wee concurred in a good opi-  
 nion of him; thereupon for justifying  
 our owne forwardnesse, I wee observed  
 him more thoroughly, and found all the  
 way good reason to ratifie our first esti-  
 mation of him. This gave my L. oc-  
 casion to send him abroade in his Service  
 after: how hee satisfied him in that im-  
 ployment, indeed I know not. But,  
 that I disguise nothing, I remember my  
 L. told mee sometimes in his absence,  
 that hee had not Account from him of  
 some things, which hee had deposed in  
 him.

him. And at his entering into his Coach, at his last going, I asked my L. Goes not the Gentleman with you? and hee told mee with some coldnesse no. So that if you bee not pressed to a Resolution, you may bee pleased to forbear a few dayes, till I may occasionally discern, whether hee have demerited or funke in my L. opinion: And then you shall have another Character of him from

25. *Julii.*

*Your very humble and thankful*

*Servant*

*J. Doline.*

which you have over

---

*John Doline*

*John Doline*

To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Kers.

SIR,

**T**HE same houre that I received the honour of your commandments, by your letter left at my poore house, I put my selfe upon the way hither. So that I am here in the habite of a Traveller, and (sutable to the rest of my unworthinesse) unfit for great Presences. Therefore, I abstain from waiting upon you presently; besides that in this abstinence, (except I misinterpret the last words of your letter to my advantage) I obey your directions, in sending before I come to you. Howsoever, Sir, I am intirely at your disposing, if you will be pleased to adde this favor to the rest, that I may understand, wherein you will use your Authoritie and Power, which you have over

*Your poore and humble servant*

John Donne.

To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Carr.

SIR,

**T**His is but a Postscript to the last Letter, and it is onely to tell you, that it was an impertinent jealousy that I conceived of that Gentlemans absence from my L. for he gives that full Testimonie of him, that he never discerned any kinde of unfitnessse in him for any imployment, except too much goodnesse, and Conscientiousnesse may sometimes make him somewhat lesse fit for some kindes of businesse, then a man of a looser raine. And this is all, that I conceive to have been in the commandment wherewith you honoured

2. Aug 1622.

Your very humble and thankful

servant, Sir Robert Carr.

John Donne.

To



To my Honoured Friend, Master  
George Gherard.

SIR,  
YOUR Letter was the more welcome to mee, because it brought your commandment with it, of sending you perfumes: for it is a Service somewhat like a Sacrifice. But yet your commandment surpris'd me, when neither I had enough to send, nor had means to recover more; that Ladie being out of Towne which gavethem me. But Sir, if I had 10000000. I could send you no more then I doe; for I send all. If any good occasion present it selfe to you, to send to my L. Clifford, spare my name a roome, there where you offer him most of your Service. I dare contend with you, that you cannot exceed mee, in desiring to serve him. It is a better office from me to you, that I goe to bed, then that I write a longer letter. For if I doe mine eyes a little more injurie, I shall lose the  
honour

honour of seeing you at Michaelmas; for by my troth I am almost blinde: you may be content, to beleeve that I am always disposed to your service, without exception of any time, since now just at midnight, when it is both day, and night, and neither, I tell you that I am

*Your affectionate friend and servant*

**J. Donne.**

---

*To my very much honoured friend George  
Garrard Esquire at Sion.*

**SIR,**

**I** Know not which of us wonne it by the hand, in the last charge of Letters. If you wonne, you wonne nothing, because I am nothing, or whatsoever I am, you wonne nothing, because I was all yours before. I doubt not but I were better delive-

O o

red

red of dangers of relapses, if I were at London; but the very going would indanger me. Upon which true debility, I was forced to excuse my selfe to my Lord Chamberlaine, from whom I had a Letter of command to have Preached the fifth of November Sermon to the King. A service which I would not have declined, if I could have conceived any hope of standing it. I beseech you intreat my Lord Percy in my behalfe, that he will be pleased to name George to my L. Carlile, and to wonder, if not to inquire, where he is. The world is disposed to charge my Lords honour, and to charge my naturall affection with neglecting him, and, God knowes, I know not which way to turn towards him; nor upon any message of mine, when I send to kisse my Lords hands, doth my Lord make any kinde of mention of him. For the Diamond Lady, when time serves, I pray look to it; for I would faine be discharged of it. And for the rest, let them be but remembered how long it hath been in my hands,

hands, and then leave it to their discretion. If they incline to any thing, I should chuse shirt *Holland*, rather under then above 4 s. Our blessed Saviour multiply his blessings upon that noble family where you are, and your self, and your sonne; as upon all them that are derived from

*Your poor friend and servant*

**J. Donne.**

*To my very much respected friend Mr.*

*George Garrard.*

**SIR,**  
**T**hank you for expressing your love to me, by this diligence, I know you can distinguish between the voyces of my love, and of my necessity, if any thing in my Letters sound like an importunity. Besides, I will adde thus much out of counsell to

you, that you can do nothing so thriftily as to keep in your purpose the payment of the rest of this years rent, (though at your conveniency) for Sir E. H. curiosity being so served at first, I shall be no farther cause; but that the rest be related, and you in as good possession of his love, and to as good use, as your love deserves of him. You mocke us when you aske news from hence. All is created there, or relates thither where you are. For that book which you command me to send, I held it but half an hour: which served me to read those few leafes, which were directed upon some few lines of my book. If you come to town quickly, you may get a fair widow: for Mrs Brown is fallen to that state by death of her husband. No man desires your comming more, nor shall be readier to serve you, then

*Your affectionate friend and servant*

J. Donne.

To

*To my Honoured friend M. George Gherard,  
over against Salisbury house.*

S I R,

I Do not make account that I am come to London, when I get within the wall: that which makes it London is the meeting of friends. I cannot therefore otherwise bid my self welcome to London, then by seeking of you, which both Sir H. Goodere and I do, with so much diligence, as that this messenger comes two dayes before to intreat you from us both, to reserve your self upon Saterday: so that I may, at our coming to London that night, understand at my house where I may send you word of our supping place that night, and have the honour of your company. So you lay more obligations upon

Your poor unprofitable servant

J. Donne.

To my very much Honoured friend George  
Garret Esquire.

S I R,

**V**Hen we thinke of a friend, we do not count that a lost thought, though that friend never knew of it. If we write to a friend, we must not call it a lost Letter, though it never finde him to whom it was addressed: for we owe our selves that office, to be mindefull of our friends. In payment of that debt, I send out this Letter, as a Sentinell Perdue, if it finde you, it comes to tell you, that I was possessed with a Fever, so late in the year, that I am afraid I shall not recover confidence to come to London till the spring be a little advanced. Because you did our poor family the favour, to mention our George in your Letters to Spain, with some earnestnesse, I should wonder if you never had any thing from thence concerning him; he having been now, divers moneths, in  
Spain.



*Spaine.* If you be in *London* and the Lady of the Jewell there, at your conveniency informe me, what is looked for at my hands, in that businesse; for, I would be loath to leave any thing in my house, when I die, that were not absolutely mine own. I have a servant, *Roper*, at *Pauls house*, who will receive your commandments; at all times. God blesse you and your house, with the same blessings which I beseege for the children, and for the person of

*Your poor friend and humble*

*servant in Chr. Jof.*

*J. Donne.*

*To*

To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert  
Karre, Gentleman of his Highnesses  
Bed-chamber.

SIR,  
I Am come to that tendernesse of conscience, that I need a pardon for meaning to come to *Newmarket* in this weather. If I had come, I must have asked you many reall pardons, for the many importunities that I should have used towards you. But since I have divers errands thither, (except I belie my self in that phrase, since it is all one errand to promove mine own business, and to receive your commands) I shall give you but a short respite, since I shall follow this paper within two dayes. And (that I accuse my self, no farther then I am guilty) the principall reason of my breaking the appointment of waiting upon M. *Rawlins*, was, that I understood the King was from *Newmarket*, and for comming thither in the Kings absence, I never heard of excuse;  
except

except when *Butler* sends a desperate Patient in a Consumption thither for good aire, which is an ill errand now. Besides that I could not well come till now, ( for there are very few dayes past, since I took Orders) there can be no losse in my absence except when I come, my Lord should have thereby the lesse latitude, to procure the Kings Letters to *Cambridge*. I beseech you therefore, take some occasion to refresh that businesse to his Lordship, by presenting my name, and purpose of comming very shortly: and be content to receive me, who have been ever your servant, to the addition of

*Your poor Chaplaine*

27 January.

J. Donne.

P p

To

To the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount  
of Rochester.

*My most Honourable good Lord,*

**A**fter I was grown to be your Lordships, by all the titles that I could thinke upon, it hath pleased your Lordship to make another title to me, by buying me. You may have many better bargaines in your purchases, but never a better title then to me, nor any thing which you may call yours more absolutely and intirely. If therefore I appear before your Lordship sometimes in these Letters of thankfulness, it may be an excusable boldnesse, because they are part of your evidences by which you hold me. I know there may be degrees of importunity even in thankfulness: but your Lordship is got above the danger of suffering that from me, or my Letters, both because my thankfulness cannot reach to the benefits already received, and because the favour of receiving my Letters is a new benefit.

benefit. And since good Divines have made this argument against deniers of the Resurrection, that it is easier for God to recollect the Principles, and Elements of our bodies, howsoever they be scattered, then it was at first to create them of nothing, I cannot doubt, but that any distractions or diversions in the ways of my hopes, will be easier to your Lordship to reunite, then it was to create them. Especially since you are already so near perfecting them, that if it agreed with your Lordships purposes, I should never wish other station, then such as might make me still, and onely

*Your Lordships*

*Most humble and devoted servant*

*J. Donne.*

To the Honorable Knight Sir Robert  
Karre.

SIR,  
**L**est you should think your selfe too  
much beholding to your fortune, and  
so relie too much upon her hereafter, I  
am bold to tell you, that it is not onely  
your good fortune that hath preserved you  
from the importunity of my visits all this  
time. For my ill fortune, which is stron-  
ger, then any mans good fortune, hath  
concurred in the plot to keep us asunder,  
by infecting one in my house with the  
Measels. But all that, is so safely over-  
worne, that I dare, not onely desire to  
put my selfe into your presence, but by  
your mediation, a little farther. For,  
esteeming my selfe, by so good a title, as  
my Lords own words, to be under his  
providence, and care of my fortune, I  
make it the best part of my studies how I  
might ease his Lordship by finding out  
some-

something for my selfe. Which, because I  
thinke I have done, as though I had done  
him a service therein, I adventure to desire  
to speake with him, which I beseech you  
to advance, in addition to your many fa-  
vours and benefits to me. And if you have  
occasion to send any of your servants to  
this town, to give me notice, what times  
are fittest for me to waite, to enjoy your fa-  
vour herein. My businesse is of that nature,  
that losse of time may make it much more  
difficult, and may give courage to the ill  
fortune of

*Your humble servant*

**J. Donne.**

**P p 3**

**To**



To your selfe.

SIR,

**I** Make shift to think that I promised you  
this book of French Satyrs. If I did not, yet  
it may have the grace of acceptation, both  
as it is a very forward and early fruit, since  
it comes before it was looked for, and as  
it comes from a good root, which is an  
importune desire to serve you. Which  
since I saw from the beginning, that I  
should never do in any great thing, it is  
time to begin to try now, whether by of-  
ten doing little services, I can come to-  
wards any equivalence. For, except I can  
make a rule of naturall philosophy, serve  
also in morall offices, that as the strongest  
bodies are made of the smallest particles, so  
the strongest friendships may be made of  
often iterating small officiousnesses, I see I  
can be good for nothing. Except you know  
reason to the contrary, I pray deliver this  
Letter according to the addresse. It hath no  
businesse,

businesse, nor importunity; but as by our Law, a man may be *Felo de se*, if he kill himself, so I think a man may be *Fur de se*, if he steale himselfe out of the memory of them, which are content to harbour him. And now I begin to be loath to be lost, since I have afforded my selfe some valuation and price, ever since I received the stampe and impression of being

*Your very humble and affectionate servant*

*J. Donne.*

---

*To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre,  
Gentleman of his Highnesses Bed chamber.*

S I R,

I Have always your leave to use my liberty, but now I must use my bondage. Which is my necessity of obeying a pre-contract laid upon me. I go to morrow to Camberwell a mile beyond Southwark. But  
from

from this town goes with me my brother Sir *Tho. Grimes* and his Lady, and I with them. There we dine well enough I warrant you, with his father-in-law, Sir *Tho. Hunt*. If I keep my whole promise, I shall Preach both forenoon and afternoon. But I will obey your commandments for my return. If you cannot be there by 10, do not put your selfe upon the way: for, Sir, you have done me more honour, then I can be worthy of, in missing me so diligently. I can hope to hear M. *Monlin* again: or ruminate what I have heretofore heard. The onely misse that I shall have is of the honour of waiting upon you; which is somewhat recompensed, if thereby you take occasion of not putting not your self to that pain, to be more assured of the inabilities of

*Your unworthy servant*

J. Donne.

To

*To the Honourable Knight, Sir*  
*Robert Karre.*

SIR,

**I** Sought you yesterday with a purpose of accomplishing my health, by the honour of kissing your hands. But I finde by my going abroad, that as the first Christians were forced to admit some *Jewish* Ceremonies, onely to burie the Synagogue with honour, so my Feaver will have so much reverence and respect, as that I must keep sometimes at home. I must therefore be bold to put you to the pain of considering me. If therefore my Lord upon your deliverie of my last Letter, said nothing to you of the purpose thereof; let me tell you now, that it was, that in obedience of his commandment, to acquaint him with any thing which might advantage me, I was bold to present that which I heard, which was that Sir D. Carlton was

likely to bee removed from *Venice*, to the States; of which if my Lord said nothing to you, I beseech you adde thus much to your many other Favours, to intreate my Lord at his best commodity, to afford mee the favour of speaking with him. But if hee have already opened himselfe so farre to you, as that you may take knowledge thereof to him, then you may ease him of that trouble of giving mee an Audience, by troubling your selfe thus much more, as to tell him in my behalfe, and from mee, that though Sir *D. Carlton* bee not removed, yet that place with the States lying open, there is a faire field of exercising his favour towards mee, and of constituting a Fortune to mee, and ( that which is more ) of a meanes for mee to doe him particular services. And Sir, as I doe thoroughly submit the end and effect of all Projects to his Lordships will, so doe I this beginning thereof, to your Advice and Counsell, if you thinke mee capable of it: as, for your owne  
sake,

fake, I beseech you to doe, since you have  
admitted mee for

*Your humble servant*

J. Donne.

---

*To the Honoured Knight, Sir  
Robert Karre.*

S I R,

I Amend to no purpose, nor have any  
use of this inchoation of health, which  
I finde, except I preserve my roome, and  
station in you. I beginne to bee past  
hope of dying : And I feele that a little  
ragge of *Monte Magor*, which I read last  
time I was in your Chamber, hath  
wrought prophetically upon mee, which  
is, that Death came so fast towards mee,  
that the over-joy of that recovered mee.  
Sir, I measure not my health by my ap-  
petite, but onely by my abilitie to come  
to kisse your hands : which since I can-  
not hope in the compasse of a few dayes,

I beseech you pardon mee both these intrusions of this Letter, and of that within it. And though Schoole-men dispute, whether a married man dying, and being by Miracle raised again, must bee remarried; yet let your Friendship, ( which is a Nobler learning ) bee content to admit mee, after this Resurrection, to bee still that which I was before, and shall ever continue,

*Your most humble and thankfull*

20. Mar.

*Servant*

*J. Donne.*

---

To



*To the Honourable Knight, Sir  
Robert Karre.*

SIR,

W<sup>H</sup>en I was almost at Court, I met  
the Princes Coach: I thinke I o-  
beyed your purposes best therefore, in  
comming hither. I am sure I provided  
best for my selfe thereby; since my best de-  
gree of understanding is to bee governed  
by you. I beseech you give mee an assign-  
ation where I may wait upon you at your  
commoditie this Evening. Till the per-  
formance of which commandment from  
you, I rest here in the red Lion.

*Your very thankfull and affectionate*

*Servant*

J. Donne.

*To the Honourable Knight, Sir Robert Karre.*

SIR,

I Was loth to bee the onely man who should have no part in this great Festivall ; I thought therefore to celebrate that well, by spending some part of it, in your company. This made mee seek you againe this after.noone , though I were guilty to my selfe of having done so every day since your comming. I confesse such an importunity is worthy to be punished with such a missing ; yet, because it is the likeliest reparation of my Fortunes to hope upon Reversions, I would be glad of that Title in you : that, after solemnities, and businesse, and pleasures be passed over, my time may come, and you may afford some of your last leisures to

*Your affectionate and humble servant*

4 Novemb.

J: Donne.

*To the Honourable Knight, Sir*

ROBERT KARRE.

*Sir,*

**Y**Our mans haste gives me the advantage, that I am excusable in a short Letter, else I should not pardon it to my selfe. I shall obey your commandment of comming so neare you upon *Michaelmas* day, as by a Message to aske you whether that or the next morning bee the fittest to sollicite your further Favour. You understand all Vertue so well, as you may be pleased to call to minde what thankfulnessse and services are due to you from me, and beleve them all to bee expressed in this ragge of Paper, which gives you new assurance, that I am ever

*Your most humble servant*

J. Donne.

*To*

*To your selfe.*

S I R,

**I**F I shall never be able to do you any reall service, yet you may make this profit of me, that you be hereafter more cautelous in receiving into your knowledge, persons so uselesse, and importune. But before you come to so perfect a knowledge of me, as to abandon me, go forward in your favours to me, so farre, as to deliver this Letter according to the addresse. I think I should not come nearer his presence then by a Letter: and I am sure, I would come no other way, but by you. Be you therefore pleased, by these noble favours to me, to continue in me the comfort which I have in being

*Your very humble and thankfull servant*

Drury house, 23 Sept.

J. Donne.

*To*

*To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre.*

SIR,

A Few hours after I had the honour of your Letter, I had another from my Lord of *Bath and Wells*, commanding from the King a Copy of my Sermon. I am in preparations of that, with diligence, yet this morning I waited upon his Lordship, and laid up in him this truth, that of the *B. of Canterburies* Sermon, to this hour, I never heard syllable, nor what way, nor upon what points he went: And for mine, it was put into that very order, in which I delivered it, more then two moneths since. Freely to you I say, I would I were a little more guilty: Onely mine innocency makes me afraid. I hoped for the Kings approbation heretofore in many of my Sermons; and I have had it. But yesterday I came very near looking for thanks; for, in my life, I was never in any one peece, so studious of his service. Therefore, excepti-

no:gil

R r

ons

ons being taken, and displeasure kindled at this, I am afraid, it was rather brought thither, then met there. If you know any more, fit for me, (because I hold that unfit for me, to appear in my Masters sight, as long as this cloud hangs, and therefore this day forbear my ordinary waitings) I beseech you to intimate it to

*Your very humble and very thankfull servant*

**J. Donne.**

*To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre,*  
now I know I at Court.

**SIR,**

I Humbly thanke you, for this continuing me in your memory, and enlarging me so far, as to the memory of my Sovereign, and (I hope) my Master. My Tenets are always, for the preservation of the Religion

ligion I was born in, and the peace of the State, and the rectifying of the Conscience; in these I shall walke, and as I have from you a new seal thereof, in this Letter, so I had ever evidence in mine own observati- on, that these ways were truly, as they are justly, acceptable in his Majesties care. Our blessed Saviour multiply unto him all blessings, *Amen.*

*Your very true and intire servant in Chr. Jes.*

*J. Donne.*

*To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre,*  
*at Court.*

*SIR,*  
**I** Was this morning at your door, some-  
what early; and I am put into such a  
distaste of my last Sermon, as that I dare  
not practise any part of it, and therefore  
though I said then, that we are bound to



speake aloud, though we awaken men, and make them froward, yet after two or three modest knocks at the door, I went away. Yet I understood after, the King was gone abroad, and thought you might be gone with him. I came to give you an account of that, which this does as well. I have now put into my Lord of Bath and Wells hands the Sermon faithfully exscribed. I beseech you be pleased to hearken farther after it; I am still upon my jealousy, that the King brought thither some disaffection towards me, grounded upon some other demerit of mine, and took it not from the Sermon. For, as Card. *Cusanus* writ a Book *Cribratio Alchorani*, I have cribrated, and re cribrated, and post-cribrated the Sermon, and must necessarily say, the King who hath let fall his eye upon some of my Poems, never saw, of mine, a hand, or an eye, or an affection, set down with so much study, and diligence, and labour of syllables, as in this Sermon I expressed those two points, which I take so much to conduce

to.

to his service, the imprinting of persuasibility and obedience in the subject, And the breaking of the bed of whisperers, by casting in a bone, of making them suspect and distrust one another. I remember I heard the old King say of a good Sermon, that he thought the Preacher never had thought of his Sermon, till he spoke it; it seemed to him negligently and extemporally spoken. And I knew that he had weighed every syllable, for halfe a year before, which made me conclude, that the King had before, some prejudice upon him. So, the best of my hope is, that some over bold allusions, or expressions in the way, might divert his Majesty, from vouchsafing to observe the frame, and purpose of the Sermon. When he sees the generall scope, I hope his goodnesse will pardon collaterall escapes. I intreated the B. to aske his Majesty, whether his displeasure extended so farre; as that I should forbear waiting, and appearing in his presence; and I had a return, that I might come. Till I had that, I would not

offer to put my self under your roof: To day I come, for that purpose, to say prayers. And if, in any degree, my health suffer it, I shall do so, to morrow. If any thing fall in- to your observation before that, (because the B. is likely to speake to the King of it, perchance, this night ) if it amount to such an increase of displeasure, as that it might be unfit for me to appear, I beseech you afford me the knowledge. Otherwise, I am likely to inquire of you personally, to morrow before nine in the morning, and to put into your presence then.

*Your very humble and very true, and  
very honest servant to God and  
the King and you*

*J. Donne.*

*I writ yesterday to my L. Duke, by my  
L. Carlile, who assured me of a gracious ac-  
ception of my putting my self in his pro-  
tection.*

*To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre,  
at Court.*

SIR,

**I**F I should refuse the liberty which you  
enlarge to me, of eating in your cham-  
ber, you might suspect that I reserved it for  
greater boldnesses, and would not spend  
it in this. But, in good faith, I do not eat  
before, nor can after, till I have been at  
home; so much hath my this years debi-  
lity disabled me, even for receiving favours.  
After the Sermon, I will steal into my  
Coach home, and pray that my good pur-  
pose may be well accepted, and my defects  
graciously pardoned. *Amen.*

*Yours intirely*

**J. Donne.**

*I will be at your chamber at one after noon.*

*To*

*To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre,  
at Court.*

S I R,

I Pursued my ambition of having the honour to kisse your hands some where, so farre, as to inform my selfe occasionally of my great neighbour. And I perceive he is under an inundation of uncertain commers, which he cannot devest, except I had your leave, to speake plain to him. A second inconvenience is, that he is so deafe, that we must speak to the whole house, if we will speake to him. And a third is, that I am in a riddling, rather a juggling indisposition, fast and loose, and therefore dare not stirre farre. Yet Sir, I am not thereby unfit to receive the honor of seeing you here, if greater businesse have not overcome, or worn out, your former inclinableness to come into these quarters. If you shall be pleased to say to my man, that you will make as though you

you dined with me to day, and come, if your  
businessse require your going to his Lord-  
ship, you may dine with him, after you  
have fasted with me. To day, or any day,  
which may be more yours, I aske it of  
you with all earnestnesse, on this side im-  
portunity, which is the detestation of

*Your humblest and thankfullest servant*

*J. Donne.*

*To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Karre,*

*at Court.*

SIR,

**T**His morning I have received a signi-  
fication from my Lord Chamber-  
laine, that his Majesty hath commanded  
to morrows Sermon at S. James; And that  
it is in the after-noon; (for, into my  
mouth there must not enter the word, after-  
dinner, because that day there enters no  
dinner

dinner into my mouth.) Towards the time of the service, I aske your leave, that I may hide my selfe in your out-chamber. Or if businesse, or privatenesse, or company make that inconvenient, that you will be pleased to assigne some servant of yours to shew me the Closet, when I come to your chamber. I have no other way there, but you; which I say not, as though I had not assurance enough therein, but because you have too much trouble thereby; nor I have no other end there, then the Pulpit: you are my station, and that my exaltation; And in both, I shall ever endeavour, to keep you from being sorry for having thought well of, or being ashamed of having testified well for.

Your poor and very true

Servant in Chr. J. Donne

J. Donne

To



*To the Honourable Knight Sir Robert Karre,  
at Court.*

**SIR,**  
I Have obeyed the formes of our Church  
of *Pauls* so much, as to have been a so-  
lemn Christmas man, and tryed conclusi-  
ons upon my selfe, how I could sit out the  
siege of new faces, every dinner. So that I  
have not seen the B. in some weeks. And  
I know not whether he be in case, to afford  
that privacy, which you justly desire. This  
day, I am in my bondage of entertaining.  
Suppers I presume, are inconvenient to you.  
But this evening I will spie upon the B. and  
give you an account to morrow morning  
of his disposition; when, if he cannot be  
intire to you, since you are gone so farre  
downwards in your favours to me, be plea-  
sed to pursue your humiliation so farre as  
to chuse your day, and either to suffer the  
solitude of this place, or to change it, by  
such company, as shall waite upon you,  
S f 2 and

and come as a visitor and overseer of this  
Hospitall of mine, and dine or sup at this  
miserable chezmey.

*Your humblest and thankfullest servant*

4 Jan. 1626.

J. Donne.

*To my Noble friend M<sup>rs</sup> Cokain at*

*Ashburne.*

*My noblest sister,*

**B**Ut that it is sweetned by your  
command, nothing could trouble me  
more, then to write of my self. Yet, if I  
would have it known, I must write it my  
self; for, I neither tell children, nor servants,  
my state. I have never good temper, nor  
good pulse, nor good appetite, nor good  
sleep. Yet, I have so much pleasure to recol-  
lect my self, as that I can thinke I have been  
long thus, or I often thus. I am not alive,  
because

because I have not had enough upon me to kill me, but because it pleases God to passe me through many infirmities before he take me either by those particular remembrances, to bring me to particular repentances, or by them to give me hope of his particular mercies in heaven. Therefore have I been more affected with Coughs in vehemence, more with deafnesse, more with toothach, more with the yurbah, then heretofore. All this mellowes me for heaven, and so ferments me in this world, as I shall need no long contestation in the grave, but hasten to the resurrection. Not onely to be nearer that grave, but to be nearer to the service of the Church, as long as I shall be able to do any, I purpose, God willing, to be at London, within a fortnight after your receipt of this, as well because I am under the obligation of preaching at *Pauls* upon Candlemas day, as because I know nothing to the contrary, but that I may be called to Court, for Lent service; and my witnesse is in heaven, that I never left out *S. Dunstons*,  
. D I S P U T
3
when

when I was able to do them that service;  
 nor will now; though they that know the  
 state of that Church well, know that I am  
 not so bound, as the world thinks, to preach  
 there; for, I make not a shilling profit of  
 S. Dunstons as a Church-man, but as my L.  
 of Dorset gave me the lease of the Impropr-  
 iation, for a certain rent, and a higher rent,  
 then my predecessor had it at. This I am fain  
 to say often, because they that know it not,  
 have defamed me, of a defectiveness to-  
 wards that Church; and even that mista-  
 king of theirs I ever have, and ever shall en-  
 deavour to rectifie, by as often preaching  
 there, as my condition of body will admit.  
 All our company here is well, but not at  
 home now, when I write; for, lest I should  
 not have another return to London, before  
 the day of your Carrier, I write this, and rest

15 Jan. 1630.  
 Abrey-hatch.

*Your very affectionate servant,  
 and friend, and brother*

J. Donne.

THE END.

